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The Shape of Things

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THE POWER OF A STATE TO ENACT A FAIR-trade act whereby a manufacturer may control the resale price of his branded product by the retailer was upheld on December 7 by the United States Supreme Court, passing on the constitutionality of an Illinois and a California act. Justice Sutherland, who delivered the unanimous opinion of the court, was careful, however, to limit the scope of the opinion to the protection of brands and trade-marks, and to point out that this does not make state price-fixing of unmarked products constitutional. Following upon the validation of the New York social-insurance law, this decision indicates a new strategy on the part of the conservative majority. The Tipaldo minimum-wage decision last year created a no man's land in which both the state and federal governments were powerless to act. Our guess is that the court will now be careful to preserve state power so that it may continue to restrict federal power over our economic life. One fact about the present decision is interesting. It will be recalled that last year the New York Court of Appeals, in the case of Doubleday, Doran *vs.* Macy, invalidated the very same fair-trade act as passed by New York. By a peculiarity of New York procedure the decision could not be appealed to the United States Supreme Court. But with the present decision from Washington on the Illinois law, it is up to the New York Court of Appeals to grant a rehearing in the Macy case.

*

WHAT DOES THE BUENOS AIRES CONFERENCE thus far add up to? There has been good-will galore; a determination to lower trade barriers, at least in quarters where competition is not acute; and a proposal to create peace machinery in the Western Hemisphere through a consultative pact and a common neutrality policy. In addition Mr. Naft, writing elsewhere in this issue, counts President Roosevelt's speech as a direct challenge to the dictators whose representatives applauded his demand for democracy, and as an invitation to action on the part of their oppressed populations. But good words are often spoken for liberty in the worst tyrannies. It's an old Spanish-American custom. We should be less skeptical of the effectiveness of Mr. Roosevelt's words if we did not know that Nazi influence is growing throughout Latin America; that 17,000 political prisoners lie in the jails of Brazil; that the government of Peru has just illegally set aside the election of a Social-

Democratic President; that in Cuba the military regime of Batista completely dominates the weak civil power of President Gomez. It would be easy to argue that President Roosevelt and Secretary Hull cast their words for peace and democracy before men to whom they could carry no echo of reality. But we are glad they made the attempt.

*

WITH THE WITHDRAWAL OF CITIZENSHIP from Thomas Mann, first German man of letters, the Nazi government on December 3 brought to a climax a fortnight of official acts, which, if they were not stern reality, would sound like a burlesque of a Gilbert and Sullivan operetta. On November 9 a decree was issued compelling the owners of foreign securities in Germany to deposit them in the Reichsbank or its agent banks, which thereby become exclusive brokers for these securities. On November 27 Propaganda Minister Goebbels announced that all criticism of works of art, including drama, films, literature, painting, and sculpture would be prohibited in the Reich except "on the basis of the National Socialist view of culture." On November 30 Minister of the Interior Frick ordered all civil servants to abandon the terms Christian, Protestant, and Catholic in documents designating a citizen's religion. On December 1 the German Cabinet and General Göring jointly delivered themselves of a decree ordering (1) the death penalty for Germans discovered to have smuggled money or other property out of the country, and (2) all boys and girls to join the National Socialist youth organizations. This tightening up of the Nazi traces is more than an exercise in tyrannical ingenuity on the part of Chancellor Hitler. In spite of alliances, actual or promised, with other fascist states, world pressure against the dictators is threatening. And the clouds of war grow steadily thicker. A united front at home, by the mailed fist if need be, and the accumulation of funds and goods, by lawful or unlawful means, are imperative if the war chest is to be ready when needed.

*

A TOTALLY UNEXPECTED SHORT CIRCUIT blew out the Tennessee power consumers' conference whose projected meeting was mentioned in *The Nation* of December 5. It had been called to protect the interests of the Valley consumers in the face of suspicions that the TVA was about to compromise on rates with Commonwealth and Southern, the holding company that controls the Tennessee Electric Power Company. Delegates from all over the Valley seemed to mean business when they cheered Representative Rankin of Mississippi, who came out flatly against any partnership between TVA and the private utilities. Yet the next moment one of them jumped to his feet, declared the conference was an insult to the President because it implied lack of trust in his administration of TVA, and stampeded the delegates into voting an adjournment "forever." Behind this seemingly inexplicable incident is the feud between A. E. Morgan, chairman of the TVA, and David Lilienthal, its power director. Lilienthal is opposed to any

truckling to the private utilities, while Morgan is said to be ready to compromise with them to a considerable extent. Whether actually suggested by Lilienthal or not, the consumers' conference was certainly designed to strengthen his hand. The untimely end of the conference will increase the pressure on the President to make the final choice between the Morgan and Lilienthal policies which he has been sidestepping for the past year.

*

IT IS A PLEASURE TO RECORD THAT AVERY Brundage, who was such an admirer of the *Führer* at the Hitler Olympics last summer, has been replaced in the presidency of the Amateur Athletic Union by former Judge Jeremiah T. Mahoney. Mr. Mahoney, it will be recalled, was forthright in his opposition to the Berlin games, and one of his first official acts as incoming president was to appoint Commodore Ernest Lee Jahncke as a delegate at large to the A. A. U. for the coming year. Commodore Jahncke was dropped from the International Olympics Committee because he openly expressed his anti-Nazi sentiments and Mr. Brundage was appointed in his place. The issue of Nazism will not arise in the games to be held in 1940. But it is highly desirable that the American A. A. U. be not controlled by Mr. Brundage or any of his friends who might share his appreciation of Nazi ideals of sport.

*

FOOTNOTE TO THE TUGWELL RESIGNATION: at the forthcoming session of Congress there is likely to be another sharp battle in the long war between the domestic beet-sugar producers and the refiners of imported raw sugar—a battle over tariffs and quotas. The beet-sugar interests look upon Mr. Tugwell's impending departure to join the American Molasses Company as merely one move by the enemy. Their Washington lobbyists busied themselves this week in calling attention to the fact that Tugwell is only one of several officials who have recently been put on the pay roll by the refining interests. John E. Dalton, former chief of the AAA's sugar section, is now working for the National Sugar Refining Corporation. Charles F. Boots, who was the Senate's legislative counsel at the time the Jones-Costigan Act was passed, recently joined the American Sugar Refining Corporation. James A. Dickey, who was an AAA sugar expert, is now attached to the Association of Sugar Producers of Puerto Rico. All these gentlemen may have been hired because of their expertness as technicians or executives. But they have enlisted in an industry without a peer as a seeker of legislative favors.

*

TROTSKY HAS FOUND ASYLUM IN MEXICO after a search for refuge which began when the Norwegian authorities notified him that his permit to remain in Norway would not be renewed. We congratulate President Cárdenas on his adherence to a great principle, the right of political asylum, which has become, even in Democratic countries, little more than a legend.

Mrs. Simpson and the Constitution

MERRIE ENGLAND is, as we write, in gloomy confusion. The sudden emergence of a constitutional crisis as a result of the stalemate between the King and Mr. Baldwin over the proposed royal marriage with Mrs. Simpson has left the world bewildered and fascinated. That the fate of an empire embracing one-fourth of the world's surface and population should hang so perilously on a woman's attraction for a man is an undreamed-of triumph for the romanticists and a vindication of the "Cleopatra's nose" school of history. Amid the array of consequences, however, two must be singled out—the light that has been shed on British mass psychology, and the problems presented to the British Labor Party.

The role of the press has been almost as disconcerting as was its role in the American Presidential campaign. To judge from the almost unanimous support the respectable press gave Mr. Baldwin, one would have thought that the British people would allow a narrow religious and nationalist outlook to dominate their democratic sympathies. Instead they have rallied to the King in what seem like overwhelming numbers. There can be little doubt that if a general election were held now, the party supporting the King would win by a Roosevelt landslide. The British monarchy, in so far as it rests on the attitude of the people to the king, has been democratized—we might almost say Americanized—as thoroughly as have the tabloids and the cinema.

It does credit to the political sagacity of Winston Churchill and Sir Oswald Mosley that they have been quick to back up the King and translate that backing into political advantage, the latter for his fascist party, the former for the new centrist party that he is reported on good authority to be forming. The Labor Party on the other hand is in a cruel dilemma. It confronts at once an opportunity and a danger. Never before has British labor had a chance to come out for so popular an issue as the King's freedom of choice in his private affairs, go to the country, and be overwhelmingly returned to power. Never before has such a tantalizing chance been so fraught with grave danger for the party and the whole nation.

The strength of the British Labor Party is rooted in two traditions. One is the tradition of the democratic way of life, with all that it implies for social equality, religious tolerance, personal freedom. Without tapping these democratic springs of conduct and sources of strength, the Labor Party could never hope to win power. But as Harold Laski pointed out in an article in the *London Daily Herald* and another in the *New York Times*, without the English constitutional tradition of ultimate ministerial responsibility it could never hope to retain what power it won. The Labor Party leaders therefore have deliberately shut their eyes to several facts—that Edward is a popular monarch, that the privilege

he is fighting for is a democratic privilege accorded to all people, that he is a king far more sensitive to the economic plight of the unemployed and the population in the derelict areas than any other monarch is likely to be; and have kept in mind one fact—that once you establish the principle that the king can act without his ministers, you have broken down the chief constitutional protection of a future Labor Cabinet; you have established not only a constitutional but also a psychological precedent whereby a very different sort of king may some day be used by reactionary and fascist groups to overthrow the socialization program of a Labor government.

Whether or not the King abdicates, it is an unenviable dilemma in which British labor is placed. Not only the question of a possible future labor government but the more immediate question of fascism is involved. The hostility with which the King's expressions of sympathy for South Wales were received by Cabinet members shows that, from one point of view, he is far more liberal than they. Nevertheless, a paternalistic king with a reactionary group behind him pulling the strings, both successful in overthrowing the principle of Cabinet responsibility, might provide the exact formula for British fascism. The fact that the Young England Toryism of Winston Churchill and the open fascism of Oswald Mosley are the only organized groups solidly behind the King is extremely disquieting. In such a dilemma it would be ungenerous to say that the leaders of the British Labor Party have erred in giving Mr. Baldwin their support. One can only implore them to keep their eye as much on the psychological realities of politics as on its constitutional forms.

Don't Sell Out Relief

WE are dismayed by the speed and brutality with which the Administration has begun lopping off WPA workers and the relentlessness with which Aubrey Williams, in the significant absence of Harry Hopkins, points to cold figures and insists that he can do nothing about it. On the very day when WPA artists in New York were fighting with the police in a strike against impending dismissals, President Roosevelt was uttering utopian sentiments in Buenos Aires:

Men and women blessed with political freedom, willing to work and able to find work, rich enough to maintain their families and to educate their children, contented with their lot in life and on terms of friendship with their neighbors, will defend themselves to the utmost but will never consent to take up arms for a war of conquest.

The President must also know that men and women willing to work and unable to find work, too poor to maintain their families and to educate their children, will defend their meager relief jobs to the utmost even against an Administration reelected in a landslide greased with promises of adequate relief.

"We will provide useful work for the needy unemployed. We prefer useful work to the pauperism of the dole." So said the President at Madison Square Garden

on October 31. A little while before, Harry Hopkins in his book "Spending to Save" recounted with justifiable pride the record of the WPA; at the same time he admitted its inadequacy. The reader had every reason to look forward to a permanent program which would not only provide the workless with a dry bed and three meals a day, but also use their talents in such a way as to raise their own and the nation's cultural standard of living.

The excuse for the lay-offs, of course, is absorption of the unemployed in private industry. But though the newspapers have blown the horn of plenty so loudly as to drown out dissent, private industry has somehow been able to find all the workers it needs among the unemployed not on relief. And the hollowness of the Administration's excuse is demonstrated by the fact that the ax has fallen with special ferocity on the art projects, whose workers will be the very last to be absorbed by private industry. Eleven mayors, including Mr. LaGuardia, have cabled the President, now en route from his good-will mission to South America, to protest against the drastic cuts.

Meanwhile it is an ironic commentary on the state of our civilization and on the high-sounding words of President Roosevelt that when prosperity comes in at the door, however fleetingly, an important cultural development is thrown out of the window. In cutting down the number of non-relief workers on the art projects, the political executioners are cutting out mainly the supervisors and administrators who have been responsible for the high standards to which these projects have been held. If these non-relief workers were "rich enough to maintain their families and to educate their children," we could have no just complaint. The fact is that the great majority of these people are so close to the edge that within a few weeks or months they will find it necessary to apply once more, as paupers, for relief. By that time, however, the project's administration and morale will have been wrecked and relief will deteriorate into mere made work, while the much-needed cultural outposts that have been established throughout the country will have been laid waste.

A Broad Base for a Labor Party

IT TAKES courage in these days to believe in the success of an American farmer-labor party. Long, long ago, back in the campaign of 1936, an almost solid labor phalanx joined forces with middle-class progressive groups, the Democratic urban machines, and the South to defeat the Republican reactionaries. It was a curious role for the militant worker. With his right hand he pressed the hand of the Democratic Party stalwart and said "Roosevelt." With his left he clasped that of his fellow-worker and whispered "1940." Despite this strangely ambidextrous performance his logic was good. Without Roosevelt in 1936 there could be no chance in 1940. But now after November the fluttering labor-party pennons seem as far away as ever. The trade-union

ranks are deeply split. The Tampa rump convention has left the most reactionary elements in the A. F. of L. saddle. As for leadership in 1940, Olson is dead, Lewis is rapidly gaining enemies, and the La Follettes are still wrapped in their Hamlet-like indecision as to whether they are to be or not to be for a farmer-labor party.

But the unkindest cut of all is that of the American Labor Party. That, it will be remembered, was to be the New York spearpoint of a permanent national labor-party movement. "This campaign is to test our strength," everyone said, "but just wait until after the election." Their 300,000 votes in New York were a pretty fair confirmation of that strength. And now what has happened to the high hopes that burgeoned in November? They are in danger of being crushed in the hot and stuffy air of a committee room. And let it be noted that committee rooms do not gain sanctity by being stuffed with trade-unionists rather than ordinary machine politicians.

During the campaign the American Labor Party was a loose federation of various trade unions and political groups. After the election the executive committee of the American Labor Party appointed a subcommittee of seven to draft a plan of constitutional structure. While this committee was deliberating, a report appeared in the *New York Times* of November 30 saying that the executive committee had "adopted a resolution making ineligible for affiliation with the Labor Party any other political party or any member of any other political party." This would clearly exclude any member of the Socialist, Communist, or Peoples' Party unless the party organizations were first to dissolve. The *New York Sun*, with a somewhat different perspective, ran on December 2 a sensational story of a rift within the Labor Party, saying that the Peoples' Party group under Louis Waldman had outmaneuvered the left and center, "and the fervent young radicals who did most of the organizing of the movement are on the outside looking in." The next day the *Times*—but not the *Sun*—published a vigorous denial of this story. But the original *Times* story was never repudiated.

A bit confused in this maze, *The Nation* patiently made inquiries among various members of the executive committee to determine what had actually happened. It emerged that no meeting of the executive committee had been held for several weeks, nor had any definite action on the question of structure ever been taken by the committee. But at the meeting at which the subcommittee on structure had been appointed, and in order to guide the subcommittee in its deliberations, the executive committee had held an informal discussion to ascertain the general opinion on the question of admitting Socialists and Communists. The general drift had been that the resolution of the Atlantic City conference of New York trade unions, which had declared against such affiliation, should be followed. This consensus was of course not binding on the subcommittee, which had still to deliberate on structure and constitution and report back its findings.

We cannot urge too strongly how crucial the coming decision is. What confronts the American Labor Party is the choice between a narrow trade-union party and a

broad and inclusive party built on a trade-union base but including every other element of strength. The dangers that confront American life are ultimately the dangers that European cultures have had to meet—lowered living standards, the smashing of trade unions and liberal organizations, the extirpation of civil liberties. To grapple with them nothing short of a popular-front organization will be adequate. In America this must take account of four principal sources of strength: the organized trade unions, the masses of unorganized workers, the farmers, the middle-class progressive groups. A plan of organization that excludes any of these must prove tragic for all of them. The Socialists have taken the lead, in the true spirit of a popular front, and have indicated their willingness to join an inclusive labor party. It is our fervent hope that the final action of the committee will be to recommend a broad, democratic base for the party. It must be remembered that while the New York labor situation is in many respects unique, what New York does may prove formative for the rest of the country.

All this would seem to lend point to a letter written to *The Nation* editors by Alfred M. Bingham, editor of *Common Sense*, and published on page 716. Mr. Bingham, who is well known for his advocacy of independent labor action based on the insurgent middle class, chides us for our consistent support of a farmer-labor party. He cites the tragic record of trade-union political action in Europe, and ends by an appeal for middle-class American radicalism. While we have been arguing in this editorial against a narrow trade-union party, we

want to make a sharp distinction between Mr. Bingham's position and our own. The core of a farmer-labor party or of a popular front must be workers—the organized workers and those capable of being organized. Without them so-called independent political action becomes either wishful thinking or potentially fascist. Without their economic strength the party would be helpless in any political crisis. Without their discipline in action it would become chaotic.

We are aware of the number of instances in which labor reformist parties have surrendered to the cruel drift of history. What Mr. Bingham overlooks is that such is not the case today in Spain, where the workers are meeting heroically a situation of unparalleled crisis. Nor is it the case in France, where the Popular Front government, although weak in its international policy, is pushing through a program of important domestic reconstruction. The real point about Spain and France is that both steel and discipline are being injected into national policy by the *combination* of trade-union groups and the radical parties. What distinguishes our labor situation, however dark it is now, from the English is that the A. F. of L. has not yet written the last chapter of our labor history. The vast numbers of those still to be organized in the mass-production industries are potentially the best political material in the country. If a farmer-labor party can be built broad enough to include them, and to include as well the native populist tradition of the middle-class groups which Mr. Bingham rightly stresses, we can look forward to the future with stout heart.

Under Fire in Madrid

BY LOUIS FISCHER

[The following cable was received after an interval of three weeks in which we had no word from Mr. Fischer, and were alarmed for his safety.]

Madrid, December 6, by Cable

A MONTH ago today the siege of Madrid commenced. Judged by territory, the enemy has gained very little during these four weeks. On November 16 the Anarchist column fled in front of a small Moorish force and allowed the rebels to enter the university suburb. Since then government soldiers have fought stubbornly against odds for every bloody meter of Madrid soil, and Franco hasn't much to show for his heavy losses of men and materials.

Until six days ago the rebels attacked vigorously every day. The Loyalists held their line or retreated short distances to straighten it. Recently, however, the fronts around Madrid have been quiet. Quiet is a relative term. Every evening when the noise of the city traffic ceases, I hear from my hotel window the incessant boom of cannon and the sharp firing of machine-guns, which sounds like cavalry galloping over cobblestones. Nevertheless, in gen-

eral enemy pressure has been somewhat relaxed. This may have been due to a regrouping or to waiting for reinforcements. Certainly the brilliant work of the Loyalist aviators has played an important role in checking General Franco's offensive. The government has lately had placed at its disposal a considerable number of so-called tank airplanes, which fly low and bomb troops of the supply-transport airdromes.

It is expected in military circles here that Franco, with the help of two or three or five thousand German soldiers who arrived this week at Cadiz with their arms and officers, will probably resume the offensive at the earliest opportunity. Indeed, it has already been launched. Yesterday afternoon I went for a Saturday stroll, walking from the hotel toward the Gran Via, Madrid's Broadway. A loud noise—"Puncture!" I said to myself. A similar noise, whose solidity and violence set me wondering. I entered a fashionable men's furnishing shop to buy some woolen socks (the stores in Madrid still have heavy stocks of winter underwear, warm blankets, and flannel garments while four kilometers away the men who are defending

the city sleep lightly clothed in frozen trenches). Several customers were discussing the noise. "It's our artillery," a man suggested. But I couldn't imagine why the government would place guns in the center of the city. I returned to the street. People were hurrying, looking around, puzzled. The noises multiplied; smoke rose from above the roofs of the skyscrapers. Franco was bombarding the heart of Madrid. This morning the cannonading recommenced, and as I write I hear projectiles crash into buildings a few blocks away. How does one behave under these conditions? At seven I was awakened by artillery fire. I thought of getting dressed, then I decided I could do nothing anyway, so I turned over and slept until eight-thirty. Then I bathed, shaved, had breakfast, and now I am at the typewriter. Of course, my hotel may soon become a gunner's target. One thinks of traveling to safety, but one is ashamed to run away.

General Franco, the supreme Christian ruler of reactionary Spain, is not inexperienced at this strategy of attacking a defenseless civilian population. He has registered many victories over the women and children of Madrid. Air bombings of the residential quarters have become so regular that one looks at one's wrist watch and says, "Four o'clock, hm. They haven't been here yet." I've heard many raids and seen the machines which were making them. I have visited the spots where bombs had fallen. I have watched the rescue work in the smoking ruins. But on Friday I was in such a raid and I can declare that there is nothing so harrowing and so criminal in all the world. I was riding in an automobile just before two o'clock in the afternoon when I noticed people running. Soon the streets were empty. I could now detect the roar of airplane motors. Suddenly there was a crash, and before one could think a mountain of smoke rose above a five-story building down the street. We turned the corner; there was another deafening bang, and the bricks of the cornices mixed with wood and glass separated from a huge apartment house and fell across our path about three hundred yards ahead. We stopped the car and rushed into an entrance. A bomb whistled as it approached the earth. It made one cold all over. "Where will it hit?" I tried to force the door open to seek better protection, but a column of air struck the door and made me recoil. The bomb had crashed into the third house from the one where we had sought refuge. At the same moment another bomb landed. From the low pitch of the report I guessed it had fallen on the pavement. Half of a granite block blackened by the explosion came vaulting over a roof and fell into a narrow court to which the doorway where I stood led. A woman opened a door and called to us to come in. "Such barbarians!" she exclaimed.

For several minutes there were no bombs. We opened the door. There was no hum of propellers. We returned to the street. A military motor cyclist asked for my car to transport the wounded. He was commandeering all automobiles for this purpose. Presently they began to return with people who had lost limbs or parts of their faces. In such moments one hates violently; the hate remains.

From the lower floors of bombed houses women, old men, and little children started to creep out. All was

white; white hair, white faces, white clothes—powdered by crumbling plaster. A girl of thirteen retrieved a canary bird in its cage. She carried a milk bottle under her arm. A woman with a nursing baby, both howling, the mother's dress black where she held the child. A wrinkled old woman wrapped in a blanket, every feature on her face trembling uncontrollably, stood on the pavement dazed and asked repeatedly, "Where can I go?"

I walked back. Streams of homeless strayed through the streets, carrying now an overcoat, now a bundle of clothes, now a child's mattress. Women stood in groups wringing their hands and swaying from their waists in the rhythm of despair. This has gone on for weeks. I went through streets where not a single window pane was left intact. Whole sections look like an earthquaked city. Yet people go on living there. "Where can they go?" The Spanish government, with every resource absorbed by war, hasn't the trucks or buses, or food or money enough, to evacuate the civilian population of Madrid, and from outside comes no help. Where is the world which answered the call of Belgium? Where is the humanitarian heart of the millions who go to church and pray to God, or of the millions who call themselves idealists yet go about their business signing letters, having manicures, seeing cinemas, while a city of culture and beauty is being ground into dust?

I later learned that the raid had been carried out by twenty-eight Junkers and two Capronis. Those heroic aviators know that they killed innocent women and children and noncombatant men. They've been doing it for weeks; they are well practiced by this time. They take their orders from Berlin and Rome. Their dictator masters have made a cult of frightfulness. When the Abyssinians didn't yield, gas was used. The cultural level of the enemy is immaterial. The people which produced Cervantes, Velasquez, Goya, and El Greco are treated with the same ruthlessness as were Selassie's black warriors. Western Europe must expect no better fate.

In Spain two vast world forces are testing each other out. So far the fascists have displayed more initiative and greater daring. They were the first to send airplanes and equipment. Now they are the first to ship troops. Their submarines and other naval craft spy on and interfere with the operations of the loyal Spanish fleet in eastern harbors. Their impudence is unequalled because England and France showed them in a score of situations—Ethiopia, the Rhineland, and so on—that he who dares wins. Democratic diplomacy is no match for fascist arrogance. If Franco conquers, Europe will be black or Europe will go to war as soon as Mussolini and Hitler are ready. Madrid may or may not fall. That cannot be the end. The government is scoring important military victories in Navarre, the Asturias, and Aragon. A loyal force is threatening Talavera, in the heart of the enemy territory. Franco's rear is eaten away by revolts, peasant sabotage, and workers' resistance. Prisoners taken show that he is employing untrained Moorish tribesmen because his reserves are exhausted and Spaniards won't fight for him.

The die is not yet cast. This affair may last longer than anybody now believes.

WASHINGTON WEEKLY

BY PAUL W. WARD

Hamstringing Federal Investigations

Washington, December 7

THE opening of the annual season for federal investigations is at hand. In the coming week the long-pending examination of American railroad finance will begin, and the F. C. C.'s investigation of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, in recess for several months, will be resumed. The S. E. C. has an important investigation of investment trusts already under way, and a few weeks hence the La Follette committee inquiring into the business of union-busting and strike-breaking will convene for a few more dramatic revelations designed to get from Congress the funds the committee needs for a bona fide investigation.

All these things combine to make pertinent at this time a few generalizations on Congress's power of investigation, which always has been among the most vital of federal powers if not the most vital, and now takes on additional importance in view of the patent waning of moral indignation among the tired New Dealers. Nearly all Roosevelt's young men are anxious to believe that the groups that hated them prior to November 3 now adore them and mean to mend their ways. They are eager to yield to the losers' pleas for no reprisals, for a peace without victory; peace—and rest—is what they want. The danger is that in their resulting languors they will be easy marks for groups seeking to avoid exposure at the hands of investigating committees.

It would not be necessary for their seducers to persuade them to call off or otherwise completely prevent investigations. That is too dangerous a course; there are other and better ways of crippling an investigation, ways that are subtle and conceal the maiming from public view. One of these is to persuade the investigating committee to suppress or soft-pedal certain lines of inquiry, avoid calling certain witnesses, leave untouched or undeveloped certain themes and deals. Attempts toward these ends already have begun in connection with both the railroad and telephone inquiries. For example, certain Senators in the most intimate and friendly fashion are urging members of the railroad investigating committee, headed by Senator Wheeler, to "let these railroads recover; go easy."

Another method of stifling an investigation is by inserting in the investigators' credentials a trick clause which has no apparent significance to laymen. Here, too, we may point to the railroad investigation as an example. In order to get the Wheeler committee's credentials released by the Senate Audit and Control Committee—a tight little group of three reactionaries and one pseudo-liberal—it was necessary for the resolution's backers to

accept a compromise in phraseology restricting the investigation to a sampling list of railroads to be picked by Joseph B. Eastman, then Federal Coordinator of Transportation. The Audit and Control Committee—Tydings, Townsend, Byrnes, and Bachman—took advantage of their sole responsibility, supervision of the Senate's purse, to see to it that there should be no sweeping investigation of American railroad finance as a whole; and its stratagem remains a successful one to this day, although Eastman did the best he could within the resolution's limits and picked eighteen roads for Wheeler's committee to probe. The committee's investigators have found their digging blocked time and again as their subjects smirkingly commanded them to stop and pointed to the Senate resolution for their authority. Wheeler's investigators have found, as they and the Audit and Control Committee's prompters knew they would, that though the Senate may draw lines of demarcation through the fields of railroad finance, Wall Street draws no lines, and that deals they must investigate in the eighteen roads on their list are inextricably interwoven with deals in roads and firms beyond their reach because they are absent from the list. In short, they have found themselves charged with investigating conspiracies in which they dare concern themselves with only one conspirator and therefore cannot touch the conspiracy itself.

Mention of the Audit and Control Committee brings up the third and most effective method of choking off an investigation, and that is to starve it to death for want of funds. The La Follette committee is a case in point. It got only \$15,000 to investigate that most difficult of subjects, an industry whose trade is secrecy, and with its investigation less than well begun, the committee's funds have been virtually exhausted. Given many times less than Congress frequently has voted to bring a W. C. T. U. or Elks' convention to Washington or to aid an Arkansas or Texas centennial celebration, the La Follette committee has had to borrow staff members from other agencies and in the few hearings held to date has had to confine itself to fragmentary presentations of evidence because it could not afford the fees and travel allowances necessary to bring witnesses to Washington for long enough to tell a coherent story. The Wheeler committee is a victim of the same kind of niggardliness, though in lesser degree, for it managed to wheedle \$75,000 out of the Senate at the start and an additional \$25,000 a year later. But contrast that total of \$100,000 with the magnitude of the committee's task. It is embarked upon long, dreary, and painstaking research by highly skilled lawyers and accountants (to whom under a 1933 statute designed to curb investigations it can pay no more than \$3,600 a year), and it is dealing with a \$20,000,000,000 to

\$27,000,000,000 industry that presents one of the most convoluted structures in the national economy. The Federal Trade Commission spent \$1,800,000 just to investigate the relatively new and simple electric-power industry, a \$12,000,000,000 enterprise, and devoted more than six years to the task, which laid the groundwork for the Wheeler-Rayburn bill.

That a similar bill applied to railroad holding companies is in the offing and that the railroad investigation will lay the groundwork for it was foreshadowed in an announcement a few days ago by Senator Wheeler that when the committee opens public hearings on December 7 it will focus at once on holding-company control of railroads. The names of the witnesses subpoenaed for the initial hearings suggest that the committee will lead off by showing how it is possible through the holding-company device to pick up a vast railroad empire with a shinplaster, if one can get the proper Wall Street house or houses to superintend the feat. The list also suggests that the part that corporation lawyers play in these feats of financial legerdemain is at last going to come in for the currycombing it deserves. Leading the list of witnesses summoned were the two septuagenarians, George A. Ball and George A. Tomlinson, who last year helped keep the late Van Sweringen brothers at the top of a \$2,000,000,000 to \$3,000,000,000 railroad empire by putting up a few millions and taking off the hands of J. P. Morgan and Company the controlling stock interest in Alleghany Corporation that the Morgans held as collateral on a \$40,000,000 loan to the Van Sweringens. Before the week is out this deal will have been stripped of most of its mysteries.

You would not be far wrong if you had jumped to the conclusion that the Presidential order giving the Secretary of State regulatory powers over the matrimonial in-

clinations of American diplomats, consuls, and their staffs was inspired by E. Phillips Oppenheim. This venture in what Jack Herling calls nationalization of passion turns out to have been inspired by William C. Bullitt, until recently Ambassador to the U. S. S. R. and now Ambassador to France. Bullitt's imagination is at least on a par with Oppenheim's. He signalized his arrival at the World Economic Conference by insisting that the rooms of the American delegation at Claridge's immediately be searched for concealed dictaphones, peepholes, and cameras. Later he interrupted a luncheon at the American embassy by suddenly jumping to his feet and dashing to a window outside which the end of a wire dangled. The cry of "spy" died on his lips when his dash to the window ended in a discovery that the wire was attached to a humble telephone repair man. The romantic Mr. Bullitt has for some time been lobbying for just such an executive order as the one which was signed by President Roosevelt on November 17 but not made public until a few days ago.

The order, as you know, forbids foreign-service officers to marry aliens without permission from the Secretary of State, and to submit their resignations along with their requests for such permission. There is a story going around Washington that connects the order with our embassy at Rio; according to this tale, the Belgian wife of Ambassador Gibson is a Rexist, and he has grown steadily more reactionary since marriage. It is a yarn that overlooks many things, including the fact that the order is not retroactive. Bullitt, on the other hand, has not concealed his passion for a prohibition such as the order lays down. He used to complain bitterly to friends here that at dinner with his staff at Moscow he could not discuss official business without risk of the whole diplomatic set of Moscow being made aware of that business the following morning through the alien wives of his aides.

Behind the Pan-American Front

BY STEPHEN NAFT

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S speeches in Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires in connection with the opening of the Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Peace have broken with all American diplomatic precedents. He did not offer the customary condescending promises of protection or concessions to the little fellows by the big brother. Instead he made a virtual appeal to solidarity and mutual assistance among equals in view of the forthcoming European cataclysm, which cannot leave America unscathed. His address in Buenos Aires was a challenge against the implantation of European fascism and a warning to non-American nations to keep hands off this continent.

It was not merely a tactful departure from the usual haughty interpretation of the hated Monroe Doctrine,

implying the right to intervene in the affairs of other American countries. Roosevelt's idea of mutual protection is actually foreign to the original idea of Monroe. And a new inter-American multilateral declaration or covenant is expected to result from this conference as a joint warning and affirmation of American solidarity and mutual defense.

The changed attitude must not, however, be ascribed to the enlightenment of President Roosevelt alone. Technically and economically the United States today needs the help of other American countries almost as much as they need the United States. No longer is America protected, as during the last World War, by those two great moats, the Atlantic and the Pacific. Submarines and airplanes now easily negotiate oceans. General Balbo ar-

rived here with two dozen airplanes from fascist Italy in military formation. Japan and Germany have huge airplane carriers from which they can loose their bombers to spread death and destruction over New York, Philadelphia, and San Francisco, as well as over Buenos Aires and Rio.

The President's reception during his visit to South America leaves no doubt that the former hostile attitude of almost all Latin American countries has undergone a great change in the last few years. The popular demonstrations in the streets, the ovations given him by deputies and senators and by the usually nationalist and anti-imperialist students, cannot be dismissed as just another polite exchange of diplomatic amenities. True, young Liborio Justo, the son of the Argentine President, interrupted Roosevelt's speech in Buenos Aires with the traditional shout, "Down with imperialism!" However, his outburst may be explained by the fact that he is a quite recent convert to the Communist Party. Having probably reached only last year's line in his required reading, this young man appears still to believe that to prefer the lesser evil is counter-revolutionary opportunism, though the present solution adopted by his party lies in the united front with all non-fascist parties to the right of the Communist Party.

It may safely be said that the United States has abandoned the idea of expansionist militarist imperialism in the Western Hemisphere. The abrogation of the Platt Amendment, the withdrawal of the marines from Haiti and Nicaragua, the abandonment of financial control in the Caribbean and in Central America were practical and undeniable demonstrations of this tendency. The United States now has all the territory it needs at the strategic points for the military protection of the Panama Canal. The Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, Guantanamo Bay, the St. Andrews and Providence Islands are outposts in the East, while the naval stations in Fonseca Bay, Hawaii, and Guam play the same part in the West. No Latin American government visualizes at present any invasion or intervention on the part of the United States.

Some pessimists may not be fully convinced that President Roosevelt's statement, made on December 28, 1933, before the Woodrow Wilson Foundation in Washington, to the effect that "the definite policy of the United States from now on is opposed to armed intervention" will be forever binding on all future policies of the United States. But at least they believe in the more realistic assurance of Secretary of State Cordell Hull, made a few days before at the close of the Montevideo conference, that "no government need fear any intervention on the part of the United States under the Roosevelt Administration." That conference ushered in the new Administration's "good neighbor" policy. The United States approved a convention on the rights and duties of states, according to which "no state has the right to intervene in the internal or external affairs of another." This policy marked a complete reversal of the attitude the United States had taken during the previous Pan-American Conference held in Havana in 1928. At that conference all attempts to vote similar conventions or resolutions were

strenuously opposed and prevented by the American delegates and by their Latin American satellites, Cuba, Nicaragua, and Peru, whose dictators remained in power only because of the military or financial assistance of the United States.

Sentiment against the United States ran so high during the Havana conference that Argentina even opposed the plan of building a pan-American road between Washington and Buenos Aires for fear, as the delegate from Argentina put it, such a highway might lead from Washington to Buenos Aires rather than from Buenos Aires to Washington. The hostility was based on very concrete economic reasons—the refusal of the United States to admit Argentine meat products in competition with the American meat industry. The pretext or reason given for this embargo—precaution against transferable plant and animal diseases—did not console the Argentine cattle raisers. Nothing could have gone farther toward reconciling the Argentine than President Roosevelt's virtual promise, during a luncheon with President Justo, that animal diseases in one region would no longer be used as a reason for excluding exports of meat products from the entire country. Sick sheep and ailing cows will no longer stand between the friendship of Argentina and the United States.

The United States no longer faces a hostile and pro-German Mexico in the south, as during the World War. As in former years, Brazil relies on the United States as its best customer for coffee, its main export product. There was never any serious friction between the two countries. Colombia, for many years bitter, has been reconciled by a \$25,000,000 compensation for the loss of Panama, separated from the mother country by the "revolution" so skilfully engineered by Theodore Roosevelt. The present Colombian government under President Lopez has a united-front regime of all leftist elements. At the May 1 celebration this year, both President Lopez and the leader of the Communist Party, standing side by side on the balcony of the presidential palace, addressed the demonstrating crowd.

None of the Central American countries now has any grievance against the United States. Though these countries defaulted all dollar loans, the United States waived all its claims and rights on the revenues of the custom duties which were pledged for the payment of loans made to these governments. During the Chaco war the United States was not accused of siding openly with either of the belligerents. At the time of the Arica affair a sensible solution for the conflict between Peru and Chile was proposed from this country: to cede Arica to Bolivia—against compensation to Chile and Peru—and thus to give this landbound country an access to the sea. Had this proposal been followed, it probably would have prevented the subsequent Chaco war. Thus it may be said that the United States has at present no enemies on the American continent.

Certain points of dispute still remain among the nations below the Rio Grande. There is the rivalry between Brazil and Argentina for South American hegemony, the unsettled frontier problem among Ecuador, Peru,

and Colombia, and the unfulfilled aspiration of Bolivia for an access to the sea. By far the most dangerous and the most immediate threat to the peace of South America is the unsettled dispute between Bolivia and Paraguay over the Chaco Boreal. Yet in the face of the possibility of a renewal of the Chaco war, this item has been expressly excluded from the agenda at the Conference for the Maintenance of Peace.

What was the real purpose behind the calling of the conference? Roosevelt's speech in Buenos Aires provided the clue. He stressed not less than fourteen times his advocacy of the principles of democracy, constitutional regimes, democratic government, individual liberty, personal freedom, and social and political justice. To a large extent his address was an emphatic warning against fascist adventures, and particularly against the danger of foreign—that is, European—fascist intervention or invasion. The South American brand of frankly military dictators and unconstitutional or semi-constitutional presidents who do not enjoy mass support is somewhat less dangerous to peace than the overseas brand of popular fascist dictators. Yet Roosevelt's speech was apparently also a warning to those Latin American countries which flirt with the idea of aligning themselves with the European fascist countries.

Already Salvador and Nicaragua have recognized Italy's conquest of Ethiopia and the Franco regime in Spain. It is reported that Chile's President, Alessandri, originally elected as a liberal, is likewise inclined to recognize Franco. With the exception of Mexico, Colombia, and Costa Rica, almost all Latin American governments have expressed, directly or indirectly, their sympathies with the Moorish, German, and Italian invaders and destroyers of the mother country, by harboring and protecting the fascist refugees in their embassies.

Bolivia and Paraguay have at present totalitarian dictatorships headed by militarists. Bolivia's new dictator, who a few months ago obtained power as a result of a military coup, is the chief of the country's "National Socialist Party." One of the forerunners and founders of this party was Captain Ernst Röhm, who until 1932 was instructor of the Bolivian army in preparation for the war against Paraguay.

The fascist movement is growing in most of the South American countries. The Integralistas in Brazil, the Nacistas in Chile are being organized and instructed by Germans and Italians. Only Colombia and Mexico have leftist governments. Venezuela is still groping to establish political parties and labor unions after the death of the dictator, Gomez. Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Argentina, and Uruguay enjoy constitutions which are innocuous adornments for the semi-dictators who wield all the power.

However, in a number of these countries the fascists are still badly divided. There are no less than eight fascist groups or parties in Argentina, and four in Chile. Not everywhere does the army sympathize with the fascists, as it fears their competition and does not relish the idea of being superseded by civilian upstarts and armed ruffians. Moreover, united fronts, left blocs, and

popular fronts of anti-fascist parties are springing up in every country. The trade-union movement, hitherto divided along ideological lines, shows everywhere a tendency toward unification. Notable electoral successes have been obtained in Argentina, Chile, and Peru, as a result of which some of these governments were forced to yield political rights and reforms. In Argentina the candidates of the united front obtained the majority of all seats in the Chamber of Deputies during the last congressional election, and in Peru the presidential candidate of the left bloc won a few months ago the majority of the votes—whereupon the elections were promptly invalidated.

Strong native radical and leftist movements and parties are being formed in some of the South American countries. These movements have greater mass appeal than do those left parties which receive their inspiration from abroad. Among these new parties which speak the language of the natives and are, as a rule, concerned with the specific interests of their respective countries, are the Uniristas of Colombia, the Apristas of Peru, the Alianza Libertadora Nacional of Brazil. Each of these parties has a greater following than any previous leftist movement in South America.

While at present peace prevails among the various Latin American republics, serious conflicts are brewing within almost every one—the final contest between fascism and democracy. These struggles will hardly be decided at the polls. The danger will come if, following European examples, the fascist countries rally to the assistance of South American fascists or, worse still, if the latter ask or accept assistance from European fascists. It is on this point, perhaps, that the Monroe Doctrine, old or new, will have to be again invoked—but this time for the defense of the liberties of American peoples.

Whatever their platonic and sometimes even practical sympathies for fascism and fascists, several American countries seem to be apprehensive of the possibilities of aggression from Europe. America's apparent intention of obtaining from this conference merely a pan-American declaration of neutrality, and of preventing shipments of arms and munitions to belligerents in case of a world war, seems not to satisfy at least one-third of the countries represented. According to a recent dispatch, the five Central American republics, as well as Panama and Colombia, want the proposal of the United States strengthened by the inclusion of a declaration of solidarity to a point where non-American aggression against any one of the twenty-one republics would be considered aggression against them all. As aggression from abroad could come only from fascist countries, such a declaration would be in effect a promise of mutual assistance against fascism.

Whether actual treaties will be concluded for the prevention of war in the Americas, whether real neutrality will be established and maintained during the coming world war, and whether plans for mutual assistance would work, only time will tell. However, the danger of a world war in which the entire Western Hemisphere might be involved and the warning speeches of Roosevelt and Hull will greatly contribute toward strengthening the anti-fascist parties in Latin America.

Europe's Eleventh Hour

BY ROBERT DELL

Geneva, November 19

MUSSOLINI'S speech at Milan on November 1 has to some extent modified the European situation; at least that has been the effect of the encouragement he gave to Hungarian "revisionism," that is to say, the aggressive designs of Hungary against the countries of the Little Entente. It has been reported that the passage about Hungary was inserted at the last moment at the request of the German government. I have been unable to verify this report, but it is at least a possible hypothesis. For, coupled as they were with compliments to Yugoslavia, Mussolini's remarks about Hungary looked like an attempt to split the Little Entente. He can have no particular reason at this moment for wishing to do so. On the other hand, the partition of Czecho-Slovakia among Germany, Hungary, and Poland is a permanent aim of German and Hungarian policy. That aim would be facilitated by the disruption of the Little Entente.

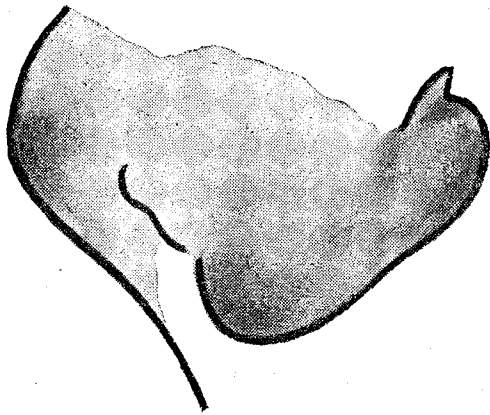
In any case Mussolini's declaration about Hungary was a diplomatic blunder. When he made his speech, the countries of the Little Entente had to some extent been drawn into the German-Italian orbit. The influence of France on the European continent had steadily declined since Barthou's death in October, 1934, and five months of the government of the People's Front had reduced it to nil. It had become more and more evident that England would do nothing to prevent Central and Eastern Europe from passing under German control and that in all probability it was the deliberate intention of British policy to give Hitler a free hand in the east in the hope of keeping him off the west until the rearmament of England was complete. The unconditional abandonment of the "sanctions" against Italy terrified the smaller European countries, which realized that they had nothing to hope for from the League of Nations and saw themselves sharing the fate of Abyssinia. It failed, moreover, in its purpose of bringing Italy back to the "Stresa front." So the British and French governments got nothing out of their betrayal of Abyssinia and the League of Nations and were the dupes of their own treachery. The prolonged negotiations with Germany about the "new Locarno" increased the anxiety of the Little Entente, especially since those negotiations were made a pretext for holding up everything else and for preventing the League Assembly from dealing with collective security or any other important matter. But for Litvinov, the British government would have succeeded in postponing all discussion of the "application of the principles of the Covenant," that is, of collective security, until next September. Then came the German-Italian agreement, which was all to the advantage of Germany, for it is evident that Mussolini had to sacrifice much in return for German

recognition of Italian sovereignty over Abyssinia. It may turn out that he has sacrificed Italian influence in Austria and Central Europe generally.

In these circumstances the states of the Little Entente had begun to think that their only hope was to make the best possible terms with Hitler and Mussolini. In Yugoslavia a pro-German government had come into power and Germany had acquired increased influence, both economic and political. The German-Italian agreement, which seemed to put an end to the complete domination of Austria by Italy, made better relations between Yugoslavia and Italy possible. In Rumania Titulescu had been dismissed by King Carol, and his dismissal had been followed by a change in Rumanian policy, which also became pro-German. It was Titulescu more than anybody else who held together the Little Entente and also the Balkan Entente, which was his creation, and nobody else did as much to bring about cooperation with Soviet Russia. For that reason he was hated by the British Foreign Office, and the hatred was intensified by the isolation and consequent capitulation of the British delegation at the Montreux conference, which was due to the diplomatic skill, the loyal cooperation, and, above all, the firmness of Paul-Boncour, Litvinov, and Titulescu. The fall of Titulescu was a triumph for Hitler and a disaster for Europe.

By a sinister irony the French government of the People's Front was unwittingly responsible for it. When Schacht visited the Balkans, King Carol and the majority of the Rumanian government proposed to invite him to Bucharest. Titulescu successfully withstood the proposal, and one of the reasons that he gave for opposing it was that a Rumanian invitation to Schacht might make a bad impression in France. When the news came that Schacht had been received in Paris with extraordinary consideration and that the Prime Minister of France and half a dozen other members of the government had attended a luncheon in his honor, Titulescu's enemies seized the opportunity to get rid of him. They represented to King Carol that whereas, thanks to Titulescu's exaggerated consideration for France, Rumania had lost what might have been a profitable opportunity, the French government was treating Schacht with obsequious respect. King Carol was so angry that he dismissed Titulescu on the spot.

Thus Yugoslavia and Rumania came to some extent under German influence. It remained to win over Czecho-Slovakia, and King Carol went to Prague for that purpose. Not that he cared much one way or the other. He is not interested in politics and is not pro-German or pro-French or anything else. So long as he can amuse himself, he is willing to adopt any policy recommended by those under whose influence he happens to be, of whom Madame Lupescu is one of the most important,



Drawing by Bert Hayden

Il Duce

for her influence is permanent. Carol urged the Czecho-Slovak government to denounce its pact with Soviet Russia, but without success. Indeed, it seems to be thought at Prague that he became convinced of the desirability of maintaining it, but if that is so, there is no guaranty that he will remain of the same opinion. Carol's mission, however, succeeded to a limited extent. At the end of his visit it was officially announced that the Little Entente would cooperate with Germany, Italy, Austria, and Hungary. The drift away from France was manifest.

Mussolini's blunder has, temporarily at any rate, made this cooperation almost impossible. The reaction in Czecho-Slovakia against the Milan speech was immediate. Krofta, the Foreign Minister, made a firm declaration in which he said that Czecho-Slovak policy was unchanged, and that Czecho-Slovakia would remain true to its alliance with France and its pact with Russia and would defend its territory against all attacks. In Rumania the semi-official press tried to explain the Milan speech away, but the rest of the Rumanian newspapers vigorously attacked it, and some of them even said that the new policy inaugurated by King Carol and his present advisers had now been shown to be a failure and that the sooner Titulescu was sent for the better. The Yugoslav press gave the speech a disconcerting welcome, but official declarations have since shown that the Yugoslav government will join with Czecho-Slovakia and Rumania in resisting Hungarian demands.

Thus, thanks to Mussolini, France has another opportunity—perhaps the last—to recover its lost influence. One can but hope that the French government will take advantage of it, but the chances seem against it, for before anything can be done France must be freed from the domination of the British Foreign Office. And that would probably involve the resignation of Delbos and certain other Radical ministers, although it would not mean estrangement from England. On the contrary, as Barthou's short experience showed, an independent France with a policy of its own gets more out of England than a dependent France, because independence is respected and England needs France as much as France needs England. The session of the commission for the

application of the principles of the Covenant, which will meet at Geneva on December 7, will offer France an excellent opportunity of taking the initiative in the organization of collective security on the lines already laid down by the present French government.

Léon Blum made a speech on foreign policy three days ago at Soissons. He said nothing about collective security, he made no reply to the Milan speech in which Mussolini repudiated the whole idea of collective action and expressed the hope that the League of Nations would disappear, but he announced that, on the initiative of the French government, the assembled nations at Geneva would shortly begin a discussion of disarmament! A man as intelligent as Blum must know that in the present condition of Europe such a discussion can be nothing but window-dressing. One asks oneself whether this talk about disarmament is not a diversion intended to cover the helplessness of the French government and its lack of policy on anything that matters.

The situation is heartrending, for there is no time to lose. The enemy is at our gates. While politicians prate about the undesirability of the division of Europe into two hostile blocs, the fascist bloc is being formed, whether we like it or not, and it is not confined to Europe. Germany, Japan, and Italy are perfecting what is in fact an alliance against Russia. This is intended to be the nucleus of a larger combination which other states will be cajoled or bullied to enter. Hitler, encouraged by the impunity he has been given by the poltroonery and the successive capitulations of the British and French governments, has indulged in another repudiation of international engagements. Clearly, he intends to coerce the countries injured by his act, in particular Czecho-Slovakia, by threatening to deprive them of their access to the sea. Yesterday Germany and Italy officially recognized Franco and his gang as the government of Spain. And this is not the end. It is only the beginning. The next step will be repudiation of some territorial provision of the peace treaties, probably that concerning Danzig and Memel.

Never since 1918 has Europe been in such imminent danger of war. Until quite recently I have not thought that war was likely in the near future, but the danger has been brought nearer by the efforts that have been made to avert or postpone it by concessions to the aggressive nations. It has been increased in the last three months by the policy of "non-intervention" in Spain, which has played into the hands of Germany and Italy and encouraged them to risk war to get the control of Spain. And the government that shares the responsibility for all this with the Tory government of England is the government of the People's Front—the coalition of all the forces of the left in France. I have long since ceased to expect much from any political party, but I would never have believed such an abdication, such a betrayal, to be possible. There is no hope for Europe unless at the eleventh hour France can recover itself and take the lead in forming a defensive bloc against the aggressive fascist bloc of the fascist hordes. And it may be that the eleventh hour is already past.

Barcelona: An Anarchist State

BY LOUIS F. GITTLER

Barcelona, November 16

THE manifestations of last week on the occasion of the nineteenth anniversary of the Russian Revolution magnificently demonstrated the solidarity of the People's Front. For more than five hours the procession of workers, peasants, employees, and intellectuals filed by in enthusiastic acclaim of the "Russian example." The demonstrators carried the banners and slogans of every Catalonian organization; the flags of the republic, of Catalonia, of the Anarchists, of the Communists, and of various dissident groups waved endlessly in the brilliant sun. Plasterers and foresters, civil guards and cavalrymen, marines, clerks, artists, laborers from factory and field walked in the never-ending ranks, singing the Marseillaise, the Internationale, and Catalonian and Spanish revolutionary songs. Few uniforms were visible; police were not needed to keep order.

Notwithstanding its atmosphere of solidarity, the demonstration clearly revealed the political limits of a popular front. The Republicans did not flaunt proletarian slogans as did the Communists behind them. They were content to appeal to all anti-fascists for unity in the civil war. The Catalonian Separatists (*Estat Catala*) were mild in applauding the Soviets. The Anarchists saluted their "Russian brothers" but emphasized the need for unity, complete revolution, complete liberty, and the intransigent will necessary for victory. The tremendous ovation which greeted the Catalonian anthem and the hundreds of yellow and red Catalonian flags showed the fiercely patriotic spirit of all Catalonians, whatever their politics.

The Anarcho-Syndicalists proved again their superior political strength. Their adherents comprised two-thirds of the paraders. Their success is attributable to the high quality of their party leadership and their talent in organization and propaganda; it is also due to the fact that Anarchist thought is peculiarly indigenous to Spain, although outside Catalonia and Aragon the movement is not yet in an advanced stage. Through the two organizations, the C. N. T. (National Confederation of Workers) and the F. A. I. (Iberian Anarchist Federation), they dominate Catalonia and guide its revolutionary destiny. The C. N. T. serves as the organizational framework of anarcho-syndicalism; it would be reduced to a sort of futile red syndicalism were it not for the aid of its brother organization, the F. A. I., which furnishes the C. N. T. mechanism with surging revolutionary fervor.

When rebel contingents of the local garrison—variously stated to have been Carlists, innocent lambs, and soldier mercenaries—drew up their artillery pieces on the boulevards and squares of Barcelona in the early morning hours of July 19 at the command of their superior

officers, the fearless young workers of the F. A. I. commandeered automobiles and, unarmed, crashed through the cannon at strategic points. At their victorious cry of "Viva la República!" the soldiers, half-dazed and really not knowing whom they were shooting at or why, turned over some of their arms to the revolutionaries. With the help of the Civil Guard, which remained loyal to the republic, the F. A. I. workers, now joined by the Socialists and Communists, suppressed the revolt in two days. Then it was "On to Saragossa," which had fallen into the hands of the rebels. It may be admitted that without the aid of the Civil Guard it would have been a question whether the Anarchists could have won the city, at least without weeks of terror and bloodshed. In Saragossa the Civil Guard had gone over to the Fascists, and the rebels could not be ousted from control.

With the suppression of the military insurrection hundreds of Barcelona's wealthy fled to the French Riviera and Italy. I saw them there in late October, huddled about radios in cheap hotels, breathlessly listening to the rebel stations at Rabat and Seville, and triumphantly declaring, "Well, *mañana, mañana*—tomorrow, tomorrow." Business and industry came to a standstill after those July days. The various left parties installed their headquarters in the luxurious houses and modern office buildings. They ripped out the rugs and sumptuous furnishings and prepared to carry through their revolutionary program. The C. N. T. stepped in and in an orderly but firm manner requisitioned abandoned property, banks, factories, communications. The railroads, autobus lines, taxis, tramways, and subways were coordinated under the Anarchist banner. A collectivized economy was set up.

Power has been invested in the various councils that have been formed. These are jointly controlled by the left parties, with the Anarchists wielding the big stick of influence. The Council of Economy, headed by a C. N. T. man, has finally established fixed economic measures. These measures actually followed direct action by the workers themselves. The council has collectivized on a syndicalist basis all enterprises which (1) have more than 100 workers, (2) have under 100 workers but whose owner has been condemned by a court for connections with the Fascists, (3) have under 100 workers but whose owner has left the country, (4) have under 100 workers if these have concluded a mutual pact of agreement with the owner, (5) have between 50 and 100 workers who have agreed by a three-fourths' vote to collectivize their factory. The undertakings are controlled by workers' committees of five. In some cases the owner is retained as director at a nominal salary. Wages will not be raised and hours will not be shortened—but lengthened when necessary—until the war is over. Banks

are under control of the Generalidad. All automobiles have been confiscated and are under control of the Generalidad and party committees, except in the case of physicians, who may retain private cars. The restaurants and hotels have been collectivized. No tips are allowed; no employee will accept them. Most of the land and buildings are in the hands of the Generalidad. The large estates have been collectivized, but the small holders are not touched. In the cities most of the smaller merchants have been left intact. Retail shops are open for business as in normal times. The social and commercial life of Barcelona is quasi-normal and surprisingly disciplined for such a tense period of revolution and civil war.

The left parties will see to it that in the event of vic-

tory Spain will never return to a remade "bourgeois democracy." Only the Republicans believe in such a chimera. But today all factions are united in the anti-fascist front, as was admirably demonstrated on this anniversary of the Russian Revolution. Despite their earlier apathy toward the war, they are now helping Madrid with troops and supplies. The general feeling is one of extreme optimism and confidence in ultimate victory. The possible fall of Madrid is discussed lightly. That Franco's hirelings will one day enter Catalonia is rejected as the wishful dream of deposed Barcelona capitalists. Catalonia will never fall under a dictatorship. The Anarchists, who represent the majority of the people, would never allow their liberties to be taken away wholesale.

Sitdown: II

BY LOUIS ADAMIC

THE effectiveness of sitdown and stay-in strikes both here and in several European countries during the last two or three years—but especially during 1936—cannot be overemphasized, and it is very probable that their importance will rapidly increase.

So far as I am aware, the first European stay-in—that is, since the sporadic "revolutionary occupations" of factories by Italian workers between 1919 and 1922—occurred in a coal mine in Yugoslavia in July, 1934; I described it in *The Nation* for August 29 of that year. It succeeded. So did the stay-in in a coal mine in Poland a few months later. But the first brief sitdowns are said to have occurred in the highly mechanized rubber factories in Akron, Ohio, nearly a year before that. They all ended in prompt victory for the workers. Only a few of them were extended into short stay-ins, which also succeeded. In this country the majority of sitdowns have been in Akron, although many have occurred in other industries; in Europe stay-ins—which of course begin with sitdowns—have become one of the central realities in the socio-political life of at least one country, France.

The sitdown situation in Akron reached a kind of climax last February with the sitdowns and stay-ins in two of the big rubber factories which resulted in a prolonged and bitter strike that closed two of the plants for weeks. These events were extensively reported in European labor papers, especially in those that circulate among rubber workers; and it is believed that these reports at least partly inspired the great sitdown on March 22 in the Semperit rubber works at Cracow, Poland, which led to a bloody strike—six killed and twenty wounded—that received wide publicity in Europe, particularly in France. The Akron dispute of last winter ended in a kind of agreement between the management and the newly organized United Rubber Workers of America, but sitdowns continued. As the rank-and-filers put it, "They put teeth into the agreement." During the

spring—or, to be exact, between March 27 and June 13—there were nineteen known sitdowns in the Goodyear plant alone; how many others that never received notice, no one knows. These frequent sitdowns in the American rubber capital continued to interest the European labor press; and it is not to be wondered at, perhaps, that among the first workers in France to greet the Front Populaire with sitdowns and stay-ins late last May were the men in the French plant of the Goodrich Company at Colombes, in the Seine district, and that one of the toughest nuts the Blum government had to crack last June was the stay-in at the Michelin rubber works.

I do not mean to suggest that the sitdown and the stay-in are inventions of the Akron rubber workers which have since been picked up by European labor, but rather that they are weapons mutually or, shall I say, *elementally* invented by industrial workers here and abroad who were confronted by the same or similar problems. Be that as it may, just now the use of the sitdown and the stay-in is more widespread here than in Europe, and I shall here restrict myself to this country.

In Akron a week seldom passes without one or more sitdowns. The local newspapers notice only the more serious ones, those which develop, or threaten to develop, into stay-ins and close-downs. The most recent one of which I have detailed information took place on November 17 in the huge Goodyear No. 1 plant. After an inconclusive argument with the management over an adjustment in wage rates, about 100 men in one of the departments sat down, stopping the work of 7,000 men for a day and a half, at the end of which period the company promised speedy action on the adjustment. This was a typical Akron sitdown.

Officials of rubber companies are frantic in their attempts to stop them. They blame them on "trouble-makers" and the union movement in general. They try to terrorize union sympathizers. The Goodyear manage-

ment, for instance, lately assigned two non-union inspectors to a department with instructions to disqualify tires produced by known union men. After pelting them with milk bottles for a while, the men sat down and refused to work till the inspectors were removed. The company officials rushed in forty factory guards with clubs, but a sixty-five-year-old union gum-miner met the army at the entrance and told them to get the hell away. They went—and the non-union inspectors were replaced.

Akron sitdowns have been provoked by various other causes. Recently S. H. Dalrymple, president of the United Rubber Workers of America, was beaten by thugs employed by a rubber factory, whereupon the factory workers sat down in protest, forcing the company to close for a day. When work was resumed the next night, a fiery cross blazed up within view of the plant. This caused the men to sit down again—and to dispatch a squad of "huskies" to extinguish the cross.

In the automobile industry the earliest known sitdowns, called "quick strikes," occurred in the Auto-Lite plant at Toledo after the 1934 strike. The idea is said to have come from Akron, for the rank-and-filers of the two towns were in close contact. Most of these sitdowns were settled quickly and in favor of the workers.

Lately sitdowns have been frequent in and around Detroit, most of them in unorganized plants or unorganized departments of partially organized plants. Ordinarily, although many of them are well executed, they are not planned in advance. Some "just happen." Even where the workers are organized, the sitdowns have an element of spontaneity; they seem an instinctive revolt against some particularly vexing condition—too much speed-up, too low wages, or the like. They are usually organized on the job or during lunch and represent the crystallization of weeks or months of dissatisfaction. A noteworthy fact is that most sitdowns in the automobile industry occur in body plants, where the nature of the work—painting, polishing, sand-papering, heavy lifting, and so on—is more disagreeable or arduous than in other shops, and the wages are lower.

During the first three weeks of November sitdowns were pulled almost daily in different departments of the Briggs Manufacturing Company, where conditions of work are notoriously poor and irregular. Two or three groups of welders sat down on different occasions for more wages and received raises. The trim division sat down one night around midnight demanding a ten-cent-an-hour boost. Then other departments joined in asking raises, till about 1,500 workers were involved; increases ranging from five to thirty cents an hour were granted.

In the partially organized Fisher Body plant at Atlanta, Georgia, union members staged a sitdown to force the management to meet their committee to negotiate an adjustment in wages. They would not resume work till the committee went into the office.

In mid-October the Chrysler plant in Detroit was the scene of an interesting sitdown staged by the metal finishers in protest against the speed-up. The company pacified them by eliminating seven "jobs" per hour and adding

four men to each of the two production lines in the department. Within the last two months similar sitdowns have occurred also in Packard, Hudson, Dodge, and General Motors plants.

In the Hudson plant a rather amusing and significant thing happened on the hood line. One day, by placing the hoods closer together on the line, the management increased production from 140 to 160 an hour. The men figured that the increase of twenty was one-seventh of normal production and, amid laughter, skipped every seventh hood, which immediately messed up production ahead of them. The hood-line superintendent raged at first, then, helpless, went back to 140. This sort of partial sitdown—similar things have occurred in other plants—is beginning to be called a "skippy." There is a rumor in Detroit that a few successful skippies have been pulled even in the Ford plant.

Sitdowns are most effective in mass-production industries with the conveyor system, but we find them also in other industries. The current seamen's strike began—at least on the East Coast—with sitdowns on scores of ships, which extended into stay-ins, which in turn developed into a big strike. On the Pacific Coast Harry Bridges's longshoremen's union has been using for a couple of years now a highly effective job-action method for enforcing its demands called "quick strike" or "quicky."

In Hollywood a group of extra girls sat down because casting directors were hiring Santa Barbara and Pasadena society girls at "scab wages." They were supported by such well-known players as Jack Benny, George Burns, and Gracie Allen, and the directors found themselves forced to restrict their hiring to legitimate extras.

On December 1 there was a sitdown at the Libby-Owens-Ford glass factory in Ottawa, Illinois. A few days before that a long stay-in began at the Midland Steel Products Company in Detroit, which affected production in the Plymouth, Chrysler, and Ford plants. See your daily newspaper for other sitdowns and stay-ins.

The sitdown and the stay-in are most significant as extremely practical devices invented or adopted by labor to promote unionization. Both the United Rubber Workers of America and the United Automobile Workers of America doubtless owe their growth partly to them. Two or three years ago the rubber rank-and-file organizers brought many a federal union into existence or to numerical strength with the aid of sitdowns, which, as I hinted last week, were more eloquent arguments for organization and collective action than any speech by the best labor leader. The federal unions were subsequently for the most part destroyed by A. F. of L. fakers whom William Green sent to Akron for that purpose, and in September, 1935, when the newly formed United Rubber Workers held its constitutional convention, there were only about 3,000 organized rubber workers in America out of a possible 100,000. The strikes last February, however, and the numerous successful sitdowns and stay-ins during the spring shot that number up to 30,000 by June. At the last convention President Dalrymple announced the union to be 40,000 strong, and nearly every

serious sitdown in the past six weeks has boosted the membership by as much as 500.

Within the last two months sitdowns have begun to play a major role in the organization of automobile workers. Here is a report and analysis of a sitdown on November 13 at the Fisher Body Plant No. 1 in Flint, Michigan, given to me by an organizer.

There was no organization in the plant. Flint is a General Motors center, once well organized but organization has disintegrated. This, plus the fact that the town is thoroughly controlled by G. M. and full of stool-pigeons, has made it particularly difficult to organize. Organization was carried on quietly through home meetings, personal contact, and contact with the key men in the plant, but with no real success.

On the thirteenth five men who had been working actively though quietly for the union were discharged. They found their cards "pulled" when they came to work. These men were in the body-building department, employing about 700. The most active union man, not among the five dismissed, had been prepared for this and had other workers interested in organizing posted at strategic places along the line.

One man questioned a foreman about the five discharged men. There was an exchange of words. Then the foreman took the worker by the arm, saying if he didn't like it he could leave, too. The above-mentioned leader, seeing this, stopped the foreman, told him if anybody went everybody went, gave the signal to his key men, and within one minute all work ceased.

A committee went to the management, demanded the return of the five men, refused to accept promises that they would be returned on Monday, insisted they be re-employed before they themselves would resume work. The management had some difficulty in locating all the men, and the division was "down" four and a half hours before they were finally returned.

The leader of the sitdown, an excellent strategist, dramatized the incident to the utmost, using it not only as an instrument to protect workers against discrimination but as an organizational weapon. In the manager's presence he took a vote of the men on whether or not they would resume work before the men were returned. The vote not to resume work was unanimous. After the five men had been located, he asked each of them to stand on a bench and testify in the presence of all that the union was responsible for getting their jobs back.

This sitdown cracked Flint wide open. That night and the next day 500 workers joined the union. Since then they have been signing up at the rate of 150 a day.

At about the same time the unionized workers in the Bendix plant at South Bend, Indiana, started a sitdown to overcome the threat of a company union. The sitdown became national news. It overcame the threat.

For reasons suggested or implicit in these two articles many of the rank-and-file automobile and rubber workers, as well as many of the organizers in the field and some of the people in the offices of the rubber and automobile unions, think the world of the sitdown. The top leadership of these unions, however, like the responsible leaders of the C. I. O., seem to view it with misgivings and, so far as I know, have as yet no very definite work-

ing policy with regard to it. None go so far as to try to fight it, but to some of them it looks like a dangerous thing in the long run even if now it helps them to organize unions. They at once like and fear it. Some fear it, perhaps, because it deprives the regular labor official of much of his authority; others because the sitdown is too spontaneous and seemingly haphazard. It threatens to play the devil with the collective-bargaining idea.

John Brophy, director of the C. I. O., sent me the following careful, politic statement with permission to quote it in this article as his view:

We do not condemn sitdown strikes *per se*. We consider that various kinds of labor activity will be used to promote organization of workers and establish collective bargaining. Sitdown strikes, under some of these conditions, may be a very necessary and useful weapon. In the formative and promotional stage of unionism in a certain type of industry, the sitdown strike has real value. After the workers are organized and labor relations are regularized through collective bargaining, then we do urge that the means provided within the wage contract for adjusting grievances be used by the workers. It is only in those instances when there is a failure of the workers to exercise the means for adjustment provided in the agreement that we disapprove of sitdown strikes. Sitdown strikes, in my opinion, occur when the employer fails to meet in full the requirements of collective bargaining.

It seems to me that the leaders of the C. I. O. and its member unions have not yet clearly thought out, in all their aspects, either the current importance or the future possibilities of the sitdown. Certainly they are not yet using the weapon as they could and, I think, should use it "to promote organization . . . and establish collective bargaining." Fearing it, some of them (I need mention no names) are trying not to destroy it but to dull it. There is even a C. I. O. representative in Akron who has been giving interviews about "disciplining" workers who have a tendency to use sitdowns.

This weapon appears to be an elemental thing, a manifestation of the modern industrial worker's rebellion against the existing economic system's plot to turn him into a machine less important than the actual machine he operates. The weapon should be sharpened by the C. I. O. and used fully; not only now "in the formative and promotional stage of unionism" but also later, when it could put teeth into agreements won through unionization and collective bargaining; and not only "in a certain type of industry," rubber and autos, but—with revisions to suit—also in steel and other non-conveyorized industries. The weapon is elemental and dangerous, but can be controlled by sincere, intelligent leaders. Now it is occasionally used irresponsibly, "for the hell of it," by vaguely discontented workers. It can be made to promote labor's responsibility and to organize the discipline which workers get from their job into an instrument for progress. Attempts to dull it will in the long run only make labor more distrustful of labor leaders than it already is.

[Mr. Adamic's first article on sitdown strikes appeared last week.]

Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST plainly realizes how the tide of public opinion has been running against him. Perhaps someone told him how the election crowd in Chicago shook their fists at his building and that of the *Chicago Tribune*, and shouted, "We beat that ——— anyway." Two more things demonstrate this change of attitude on the part of the world's worst newspaperman, our Public Enemy No. 1. There are well-founded rumors that the Hearst newsreel is hastily changing its name to disguise its ownership. The other is even more significant. Hearst has appointed John Boettiger, son-in-law of President Roosevelt, publisher of the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, his Seattle paper which was out of business for more than three months because of a strike of its editorial employees called by the Seattle branch of the American Newspaper Guild. Of course, the most important sign of Hearst's fright was his sudden discovery immediately after the election that Mr. Roosevelt was perhaps another Andrew Jackson and probably a proper representative of the American people.

These moves are characteristically Hearstian. His sudden toadying to the President brought him only additional contempt, especially among the newspaper fraternity. Even the newspaper owners and managers who shared his views as to Mr. Roosevelt during the campaign must have felt that the old man of San Simeon was losing his grip, and fumbling pretty badly. The appointment of Mr. Boettiger is so obviously another effort to curry favor with the President that it can certainly deceive nobody. Heywood Broun may be right in saying that "a son-in-law is just about as remote a relative as a fifth cousin," but evidently Mr. Hearst does not think so. For there is nothing whatsoever in Mr. Boettiger's record which would warrant his appointment by Mr. Hearst to the important position of manager of the *Post-Intelligencer* if Mr. Boettiger had married anybody other than Anna Roosevelt Dall. Mr. Boettiger's sole experience in journalism has been at the news-gathering end. He ably worked his way up to the position of assistant chief at the *Chicago Tribune*, another vicious newspaper, and then gave up newspaper work in order to become assistant to Will Hays, the sanctimonious head of the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America. Now being a good newspaper reporter is one thing and conducting a newspaper as a money-making machine is something entirely different. It is by no means true that experience on the news side fits one to be a good advertising and circulation manager and efficient in handling the labor problem of a daily journal.

The simple truth is that John Boettiger is merely an

other man who has fallen for the lure of Hearst money offered to him to lend some shreds of respectability to that utterly discredited man. Plenty of others have yielded to this temptation. The list is long and includes people as distinguished as the Reverend Charles H. Parkhurst, so long a preacher of Christian morals in New York and a tower of strength in the fight against municipal misgovernment, and David Lloyd George, the war-time Prime Minister of Great Britain, who as such helped to exclude the Hearst newspapers from England during the war. Years ago I wrote of this procedure of men who privately tell you that they hate and despise Hearst and yet work for him in these words:

It is, of course, the old, old ethical fallacy that the end justifies the means. You abhor this man Hearst and then this Mephistopheles comes to you and says, "See, I shall turn over to you part of the garden in which I work. You shall spade it as you please and draw golden ducats for doing so," and behold Faust yields as readily as ever a Faust did. So the minister of the Gospel preaches his sermon between the sex-appeal and murder "mysteries," the cheap gossip and tales of a beautiful maiden lured to her destruction, that sell the paper to multitudes.

This quotation is the more apropos because Mr. Hearst promptly announced that Mr. Boettiger would be allowed to "spade" the *Post-Intelligencer* as he pleased, that he would have complete and absolute control of the paper in every detail. So Mr. Boettiger jumped at it without the slightest thought as to the real purpose of his selection. He really believes that he will have a free hand—I haven't found a newspaperman yet who thinks that he will for very long—and he has forgotten all about those dirty, below-the-belt attacks made by William Randolph Hearst on Franklin D. Roosevelt during the campaign which so disgusted right-minded people everywhere. Oh yes, I am well aware that Elliott Roosevelt has also taken Mr. Hearst's pay and that brings the President much closer to the Hearst money. I am sure, too, that James Roosevelt, the new lieutenant colonel of Marine Corps Reserves, would not hesitate to insure Hearst properties if he could get the business for the company with which he has been affiliated. But that doesn't affect my feeling as to Mr. Boettiger's action; it only makes me the sadder that relatives of so fine a pair of parents as Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt could be so lacking in loyalty and in pride. It seems to me that Hearst was the last man in America from whom they could afford to take money. Whether he seeks to control their opinions is beside the mark. He who touches pitch will be defiled, and if there is anything pitchier than Hearst's money I wish someone would tell me what it is.

BROUN'S PAGE

The Man Who Would Be King

THE present British revival of "All for Love or the World Well Lost," isn't funny any more. It is extremely difficult for an American to understand the entire range of consequences which have followed Edward's attachment for a visiting lady. Apparently kings did this sort of thing more cleverly in days gone by. To be sure, English monarchs have always had a tendency to bungle affairs of the heart and mix them with affairs of state. A distinguished predecessor of the present ruler, himself the eighth of his line, managed to alter the course of world history by his passion for quick and immediate divorce. It may be that Edward's ardor will have results as sweeping as those which came from Henry's lustiness.

The Simpsons of that earlier day quite unwittingly were responsible for the decline of churchly power in Great Britain. And now a belle from Baltimore may be the instrument through which the crown will pass out of the picture in the empire. My English friends are fond of telling me that the monarchy acts as a stabilizer in the imperial scheme of things. But since I have no faith in empires I would just as soon see the arrangement ended. Other observers have maintained in the past that it was a matter of no moment whether someone reigned in Buckingham or abdicated. They could point to the fact that England's constitutional monarchy provided a government more truly democratic than our own. That is not to be denied. England knows no oligarchic power such as that of our own Supreme Court. Obviously a responsible ministry which goes back to the country for a new mandate when its wisdom is questioned provides a greater scope for the voter than is known in the United States.

But it seems to me that some of these conceptions falter now and fall by the wayside. The king does count. I am all for a responsible ministry, but there should be some limit to the extent of its obligations. It is worse than tragic, it is silly, that Stanley Baldwin should find it necessary to confer at length with the monarch as to his matrimonial intentions or lack of them. If a passing passion on the part of the ruler can shake the empire to its toes, then there is something wrong with the set-up. It is well enough to say that Edward should know better and give up the girl for the sake of his country's welfare, but since kings are not really divine but only human, any successor of Edward's might behave in precisely the same manner. There is always the possibility of another Mrs. Simpson. Indeed, I gravely suspect that her family name is Legion.

When Kipling's hero in "The Man Who Would Be King" went to a far country and got himself crowned he prospered mightily until he sought winter companionship with a woman. It ended his claim to divine rights, and as I remember, the lass concerned cried out of Peachey

and his comrade, "Neither gods nor devils but men!"

Somewhat in the same fashion, British radicals are saying that the King should be allowed to marry wherever his heart inclines, but this is less than a compliment. When the lone Communist in Commons rushes to the defense of his King, he does so in an effort to reduce him in stature. He would let the King make a marriage in the face of tradition because he hopes that the event will help to disestablish prevailing custom. A king in England can exercise more political power than is generally conceded, and it cannot be denied that he is an important cog in a highly stratified society. If England is to become a cooperative commonwealth, it will have to get rid of the monarchy, and surely it is more civilized to allow a ruler to step aside through a marriage service than by the grace of a firing squad. It is better to marry than burn.

For my own part I hope the commotion can hasten on to its logical conclusion. I would like to see Edward and Wally safely established in a villa of the better sort. They have lingered too long in the headlines of our native press. I could almost wish for some touch of the tacit British censorship. Of course it is impossible to deny that here is a magnificent story for general circulation. It is almost as if some tabloid editor had prayed his heart out on Christmas Eve and awakened to find Mrs. Simpson in the toe of his stocking.

Perhaps America should be grateful to a girl who has inspired so much good clean reading matter, but I have a sneaking suspicion that many another lady in the same position could have done as well and quite possibly would. As yet I have seen no full-colored portraits of Mrs. Simpson given away with the Sunday sections. I know her only through black and white and on ordinary newsprint. Until I see her on glazed paper it might be better to withhold judgment. As yet I cannot catch "the haunting beauty" which is so often mentioned.

The charm and wit of Mrs. Simpson are celebrated in American news stories, but unfortunately none of the dispatches supply samples. One is even provoked to play with the fantastic notion that the whole thing is a gigantic publicity plot which will end in a national radio hook-up devoted to announcing that Maxwell House coffee is good to the last drop.

The only Mrs. Simpson story which I know comes from a friend of a friend's friend. The gentleman in question, being in England on a short visit, called up the lady, whom he had known in Baltimore. After passing the time of day he said quite tactlessly for want of an idea, "Well, how are you getting along in England, Wally?"

And the lovely lady replied, "Well, what do you think?"

This appears to me less than a *mot*, but the answer might have run, "My dear, you're making history."

HEYWOOD BROWN

BOOKS and the ARTS

Left and Right

By IRWIN EDMAN

Left meant left when I was a lad,
And right meant right—not simply bad;
These terms both simple and geographic
And principally used in directing traffic,
Were each of them spelt with a quite small letter;
Not even the teachers knew any better.
Now each has become a Moral Sign
Dividing the race by a bitter line:
A stands a little to the Left of B,
While C stands just to the Right of D,
So that each of us knows who is good and bad,
Which none of us knew when I was a lad.

And the same holds true of red and white,
Once the names for lovely forms of light,
The red of lips, or of skies at dawn,
Or geraniums glowing near a deep green lawn.
Woe for a world of peace bereft!
I sigh for the years when left meant left,
For an age when red meant a summer rose,
And white meant a mountain clad in starlit snows.

Knopf Cargo

THE BORZOI READER. Edited with an Introduction and Notes by Carl Van Doren. Alfred A. Knopf. \$3.50.

THE editor's claim that there has never been another anthology like this is, so far as I know, justified, and it is no mean achievement in this era of collections to have thought up a new kind. For twenty-one years Alfred A. Knopf has been publishing books, and from them Mr. Van Doren has made a "rigorous selection," excluding of necessity the long novels of Hamsun, Undset, and Mann, as well as longer works not fiction, and confining the material to what has been written or translated in the twentieth century. His own taste and his own judgment of what is excellent—that is, "surpassing"—controlled his choice. He mentions no other restrictions, and that fact may lead curious readers to do a bit of research into Mr. Knopf's publishing list to see whether they would have made Mr. Van Doren's selections. Without being quite enterprising enough for that, I did wonder why André Gide, who is certainly one of the very specially marked European lions bagged by Mr. Knopf, was unrepresented in the collection. "Strait Is the Gate" would have lent far more distinction to the short novel group than Mr. Hergesheimer's "Tubal Cain." But since M. Gide's ways with his own works are erratic, nothing of his may have been available for a miscellany like this; and on reflection it is difficult to picture him descending from his ivory tower to climb into an omnibus. A group of short novels written by Willa Cather, Thomas Mann, Elinor Wylie, and David Garnett has variety and beauty enough for anyone. This reader is

especially grateful for the inclusion of Elinor Wylie's "Venetian Glass Nephew," which needed to be made easily accessible along with other fine examples of the *petit roman*, and for the felicitous biographical-critical introduction by Mr. Van Doren which precedes it. "Few novels so short and smiling can ever have been so learned," he says, analyzing the "lovely, amused formality" of this Venetian fantasy. It is placed in the collection after Thomas Mann's "Death in Venice"—with the result of making Venice seem at once the most fatal and the most fantastic of renowned cities.

Less satisfactory as a group are the short stories, in spite of the promising roll-call of distinguished names: Beerbohm, Coppard, Forster, Machen, Mansfield, Lawrence, Walter de la Mare, Zona Gale. Individually each story—with the exception of Arthur Machen's, which compared to those of Lawrence or Forster seems thoroughly "faked"—has beauty and its own kind of wisdom. But as a group they offer a surfeit of the fanciful and the remote. For this emphasis Mr. Van Doren offers an explanation that makes one wish to start an argument with him—a tribute, that, to the stimulating quality of his introductions. Most short stories, he says, are handicapped by the lack of something large about them; this something large is very difficult to achieve through pure realism; the use of fancy in one way or another gives this enlargement. Very debatable, surely. Coppard's weakness, for example, is for fantasy, however charming; his strength and his wisdom are in the beautiful realism of "A Field of Mustard" and other stories of the English countryside, which achieve more "enlargement" than any half-dozen of the fanciful tales like "Adam and Eve and Pinch Me." There is a kind of downright taste, remarks Mr. Van Doren, that can find reality only in the blunter forms of realism. One can only retort that there is a kind of delicate taste that refuses to find reality in realism, where it resides rather more frequently than in fantasy. "Escape into fantasy" isn't just a catch phrase.

This leads to one other comment inspired by a collection that with its fiction, its poetry (including its translations from the chronologically remote but humanly contemporary Chinese poets), its one play ("Of Thee I Sing"), its essays, and its excellent sample of biographical skill (Thomas Beer's study of Stephen Crane), offers a thousand pages of exceptionally absorbing reading. It was in 1915 that the Knopf ship, as H. L. Mencken records in an entertaining "memorandum" imbedded in the center of the book, put out to sea "with a jury mast, sails out of a ragbag, and a crew of one boy and one girl." Now in 1936 it is an ocean liner of the latest model, navigating a tranquil sea, decks crowded with passengers and hold full of books. 1915-1936: a quiet interlude in the world's history. To that surprising conclusion some future scholar might come, supposing a catastrophe destroyed all records of these twenty-one years except "The Borzoi Reader." A quiet interlude; an urbane civilization, with leisure to indulge its fancy, to play with its scientific ideas, to smile ironically at its amusing politicians, to distil a slow wisdom. That future scholar, it is true, would note a few puzzling intimations of less agreeable things. From the humorous portrait of a writer named Dreiser, he would learn of committees formed to combat child labor and lynching. From the monologues of a person called Sinclair Lewis (recorded by Nathan) he would suspect a rather low level

of culture. From the satirical slogans of a musical comedy, he would gather that citizens of the United States in those quiet years sometimes voted for prosperity and peace—and see what they got! But these intimations would scarcely ruffle the pleasant impression created by a study of his documents.

Probably Mr. Van Doren was well advised in employing his rigorous selection in the interest of a harmonious whole. For the total effect of urbanity must be due to the editor's selection, not to the limitations of Mr. Knopf's list of publications. Even one story by Langston Hughes ("Ways of White Folks," Alfred A. Knopf) would disturb the peace; one short novel trafficking as delicately with realism as Robert Nathan's "Road of Ages" (Alfred A. Knopf) would introduce a contemporary social convulsion. As it is, the next anthologist to celebrate some other publisher's anniversary is free to take us on a stormier voyage, where a voice speaks now and then from the whirlwind.

DOROTHY BREWSTER

John L. Lewis as Phenomenon

JOHN L. LEWIS, LEADER OF LABOR. By Cecil Carnes. Robert Speller Publishing Corporation. \$2.50.

LAST summer Benjamin Stolberg wrote of John L. Lewis at length and approvingly in *The Nation*. About the same time Dorothy Thompson speculated about him, in her syndicated column, as "a man of destiny." Early this autumn *Fortune*, giving nineteen of its spacious pages to a minute and on the whole fair and respectful examination of his background, record, personality, character, and mind, and of his new movement for the organization of labor along industrial and political lines, announced that Lewis was "a looming force." Full-length articles about and by him have appeared during the last half-year also in many other more or less important periodicals. The daily press has been full of him and his actions since last June. Sinclair Lewis, who probably has a more accurate feeling about America and Americans than anyone else, recently said in an interview printed in the *Daily Worker* that "Cousin John [they are no relation] is going places." Here is the first book-length biography of our outstanding labor leader, and it is written by a reporter on the New York *World-Telegram* who seems to believe that his subject is likely to be elected President of the United States in 1940.

There is no doubt that Lewis is a very important and formidable man—perhaps one of the two most important men in America today; in fact, his potential importance may conceivably be greater than that of the present tenant of the White House. A good, careful study of him would be in order at this time. Unfortunately, Mr. Carnes's biography is a hasty job, obviously thrown together between telephone calls from his publisher, who wanted to bring the book out before the Tampa convention of the A. F. of L., which he knew would put Lewis once more on the front page all over the country. But by this I do not mean to discourage anyone from buying and reading it. It is the most complete superficial picture of Lewis so far available. First biographies of men who suddenly jump into the limelight—which is so bright it blinds the biographer—generally aren't better than this one. Eventually, if Lewis continues to grow in importance, the volume will be useful to some more thoughtful and critical writer as a handy collection of source material.

Mr. Carnes devotes twenty-one chapters, or 295 pages, to Lewis's past, with long quotations from his speeches, one

running to nearly thirteen pages. Some of the chapters make interesting reading; none fully illuminate the phases of John Lewis's life with which they deal. One comes upon wide factual and interpretative gaps. One visualizes sections of Mr. Carnes's script as strips of newspaper clippings pasted neatly together.

The twenty-second chapter (the last), entitled An Impartial Appraisal, contains much journalistic excitement and little else. On the jacket the publisher tells us, also very excitedly, that in his present job Mr. Carnes "has managed to scoop one after another of his colleagues. He was the first reporter at the scene of the Shenandoah dirigible disaster; the first to find the Lost Chance Mountain American airliner that crashed; the first," and so on. One can't help thinking that he wanted to be the first to do something or other in connection with John Lewis. He makes much of the rumor that four years hence Lewis means to be candidate for President, but says next to nothing about the vastly important and interesting problem involved in the organization of the steel, rubber, and automobile industries now in progress, on the success of which the realization of any political dream that Lewis may have will ultimately depend. I do not say that Lewis cannot or will not be the next President; I only wish to indicate that Mr. Carnes's excitement is premature and unconvincing.

But that may be blamed as much on Lewis as on his biographer. Lewis, with whom I had two rather long sessions last summer, impresses and excites, but somehow does not wholly convince. There is something about the man that is vaguely tremendous. But when one asks him questions reaching toward the fundamentals of the human problem in America, he shrugs his vast shoulders and does not answer. One wonders about him. Not that one mistrusts him. One merely feels very uncertain. There is nothing really finished and complete about him as a big leader in this day and age. He is a man in the process of becoming something or other; conceivably a great man, but—

The book contains sixteen excellent photographs of Lewis in various interesting poses and situations. Parts of page 297 read almost word for word like some of Mr. Stolberg's paragraphs in *The Nation* last summer. Mr. Stolberg receives no credit, but the omission in all likelihood is only another manifestation of Mr. Carnes's haste in writing the book, for he makes other acknowledgments.

LOUIS ADAMIC

The Violent Mind

IDEAS OF ORDER. By Wallace Stevens. Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.

OWL'S CLOVER. By Wallace Stevens. The Alcestis Press. \$10.

THOUGH the poetry of Wallace Stevens has not lacked themes of commanding contemporary stature, these have not, until recently, constituted his major concern. His problem has been a curious one: moved to formal discourse in the quest for order and certitude, his art has not up to the present permitted him to pursue such discourse or his temperament to accept it. Instead, in an essentially evocative medium, he has continued to qualify definitions to their fractional parts, reducing ideas into images and images into sounds—and then neglected the full circle which returns both sound and image to experience and unites the fractional with the definitive insight.

In "Ideas of Order," his last volume but one, now re-

(Capital-
Relief-Tax)**CAPRETAX
BULLETIN**Number
3**The Middle of the Road**

These bulletins, together with the little book entitled "Safeguard Productive Capital," have been timed for three purposes: (1) to point out the only avenue of escape from the fast approaching breakdown of tax policies in all nations; (2) to stress the Fiscal Power of the State, not only as a means of revenue, but as an instrument of democratic social reform; and (3) to indicate the middle ground on which the extremes of Marxism and Fascism can be liquidated.

**Marxism Draws Red Line
Across Confused World**

Asserting that privately owned capital is contrary to public welfare and against the rights of Labor, Marxism draws a red line of conflict through society, and impels toward class war. Revolutionary overthrow of existing order was the purpose of Marx, as revealed by his "Communist Manifesto" and by his volume "Capital." (See also, Hook, "Toward Understanding Marx," pp. 68, 287). According to this doctrine, bloody revolution to end private capital will probably come as a reaction against universal fascism; and for this purpose the ballot "can hardly be used" (Niebuhr, "End of an Era," pp. 52, 54, 59, 180.—Deprecates violence, but regards it as practically inevitable).

**Marxist Metaphysics Confuses All
"Unearned" Income**

Assuming that privately owned productive capital is an aggregate monopoly which enslaves wage earners and guarantees unearned income to the "master class," Marxism regards every species of such income as being in the same economic category by the mere fact of its unearned character. And on the ground of this postulate Marxism declares that the logical measure to remedy the evil is to make productive capital common property.

**Marxist Metaphysics Confirmed by
Henry George**

By stressing the social problem as turning around *land*; by putting utopian emphasis upon exclusive taxation of land value as an economic panacea; and by strenuously emphasizing land rent as unearned income; Henry George drove Marxists into still sharper assertion that every kind of unearned income falls into the same category. In this way, George provided ground for the unjust, but not wholly inaccurate, verdict that his "Progress and Poverty" is good journalism but poor social and economic science.

Marx and George Cancel Each Other

Georgian over-emphasis on land is equalled by Marxist over-stress on capital. Neither of these influential writers understood that the modern parliamentary, democratic state has evolved as a political compromise between the economic energy of Capital and the prestige of Land.

Since Marx failed to envisage this compromise, and proclaimed the modern state as a categorical bourgeois victory over medieval groundlordism, he was unable to perceive that the resulting fiscal exemption of ground rent has a double effect (1) by creating a vested interest which is a liability on productive capital, and (2) by throwing tax burdens mainly upon productive effort while incidentally promoting speculation in ground values.

On the other hand, Henry George, by stressing "the denial of individual right to the use of the earth," which is involved in private appropriation of ground rent, *approached economic problems from the ethical, rather than the functional, standpoint.* His tactics are out-moded as a method of assault on today's industrial situation.

**Powerful Social Forces Unleashed by
Great Depression**

On a scale never before witnessed in American history, the great depression has let loose forces of revolutionary nature and

incalculable power. The mass of the nation is awake, but is illiterate on the subject of economics. And in this very difficult situation, with no intelligent public opinion as yet available, the government seeks to control the unleashed forces of society in legal ways.

**Short "Breathing Spell"
Now Possible**

With productive capital jammed between mounting taxes and heavy ground rents; and with an awakened but confused electorate; the national authority is doing all that can be done, for the time being. The President speaks the language of real democracy; but he seems to lack the outlook and the implements necessary to accomplish fundamental democratic progress.

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issued, the movement toward a poetry of statement was first discernible. From the initial Farewell to Florida, it is a volume almost wholly transitional, telling off again and again a theme of halt and change and voicing a determination to abandon one aesthetic climate for another—to withdraw from “Floridian” self-indulgence and calm and “live by bluest reason in a world of wind and frost,” to “return to the violent mind.” With a melancholy by turns bemused and ironic yet wholly lacking in truculence, Stevens recasts his theme in image after image, affirming, inferring, surmising—reticently as in “There is no such thing as innocence in autumn, Yet, it may be innocence is never lost”; somberly as in “Bare night is best. Bare earth is best. Bare, bare”; ironically as in “Poet, be seated at the piano. Play the present, its hoo-hoo-hoo, Its shoo-shoo-shoo, its ric-a-nic”; and humbly:

No more phrases, Swenson: I was once
A hunter of those sovereigns of the soul . . .
These lions, these majestical images.
If the fault is with the soul, the sovereigns
Of the soul must likewise be at fault, and first.

The method, however, continues to be no less oblique than that of the earlier “*Harmonium*,” even though the labor of pruning is already under way. Like Decorations in a Nigger Cemetery, the long sequence of three-and-four-line notations furnishes a convenient pattern of his approach in general: here we have, impinging upon a general mood, a series of epigrams, cryptic till the reader feels the centrifugal pull of mood fusing the fragments into proper focus.

With “*Owl’s Clover*,” Mr. Stevens’s most recent volume, the edifice of a new technique begins to take shape amid the wreckage of the old. Essentially a blank-verse sequence of five soliloquies strung together on a prevailing symbol, it attempts to explore the “violent mind” to which Stevens is now apprenticed, and weighs the consequences which an art like his own, “manqué and gold and brown,” must be prepared to accept if it is to provide equal room for “plowmen, peacocks, doves.” Unfortunately, however, the key symbol—here a statue representing a group of winged horses in flight—is neither felicitous, nor consistently employed, nor readily translatable in terms of its various contexts. In *The Old Woman and the Statue*, for example, the physical details of the marble are too vividly underscored to permit of symbolic analogy. In *Mr. Burnshaw and the Statue*, where one is compelled to acknowledge a symbolic function, it is only very painfully that the meanings can be narrowed down from vaguely political contexts to an unclear gospel of living “incessantly in change” in the stream of contemporary experience. And in *The Greenest Continent*, the most complex section of the five, one is gratuitously presented with a companion symbol—that of “the greenest continent,” Africa—which one pursues through numerous levels of reference until one comes to rest in a discussion of art, the art of Wallace Stevens, and the ordeal of rediscovery that awaits the poet in the wilderness in which he has newly set foot.

It will not be necessary to inform Mr. Stevens’s admirers in passing that “*Owl’s Clover*,” like its predecessors, abounds in the kind of orchestrative cunning of which he remains our most knowing purveyor. The music is, moreover, as Stevens intended, of a somewhat more toughened sort, pruned of bravura and merging the logical with the lyrical. Yet it is also the least fluid which his instrument has given out so far. Doubtless, the same incongruities which induce him to address political reflections to imaginary “*mesdames*” in terms of statuary and the pastoral dance recur to clot his rhetoric with gingerbread and stand in the way of a thoughtful

wiriness. His position, at present, is not unlike that of the conductor Basilewsky of his poem, who performs concertos for airplane and pianoforte; and it is perfectly obvious that no one surmises the fact more than Stevens himself. Yet his pact with “the violent mind” is one which is deeply felt, and has been sealed in somber good faith, in the hope that

The charts destroyed, even disorder may,
So seen, have an order of its own, a peace
Not now to be perceived yet order’s own.

It remains to be seen, however, whether such a doctrine does not cut the Gordian knot with a sword of two edges: one to save and one to destroy.

BEN BELITT

DeQuincey Disinterred

THOMAS DE QUINCEY. *HIS LIFE AND WORK*. By Edward Sackville West. Yale University Press. \$4.

MR. JAPP’S “De Quincey” (1877) presented some unbecoming information. The good people of the eighties must have sighed with relief when Mr. Masson’s new monograph (1881) drew only the more edifying lessons. De Quincey was now suitably preserved; he belonged among the masters. But at last, after fifty-four years, stirs again De Quincey’s disturbed spirit, with its quart of laudanum, its flaming hair.

Three important De Quincey biographies have recently appeared. Horace Eaton’s exhaustive collection of source material supplants Japp; Malcolm Elwin’s monograph will replace, as a popular text, Masson; and now Edward Sackville West attempts to interpret more fully the enigmas of this strange life. And this needed to be done—since Mr. Elwin’s little volume could not accomplish this, and Professor Eaton’s large one would not.

Mr. West’s biography stresses the childhood tragedies that De Quincey himself felt, though obscurely, to be the root of his disturbances. The death of his sister Elizabeth (Mater Lachrymarum, the first of De Quincey’s three fateful muses) becomes the center of his dark obsessions. The perplexing relationship with the immortalized prostitute of Oxford Street, and the later, less significant bond with Margarite are traced back, joined to this basic love-death pattern. Here then is the psychological origin of De Quincey’s recurrent visions of destruction, his dread of impending retribution? (“I had done a deed which the ibis and the crocodile trembled at.”) Is this the source of De Quincey’s retreats into the slums of London, his flights from one set of dwellings to another, his “perfect craze for being despised,” his passion for stage coaches? Does this explain De Quincey’s “attack of nervous horror” at the death of the Wordsworth child, the opium crisis after marriage, the laudanum sieges which intersect his life: four great cycles of disintegration?

No; Mr. West, more concerned with the fundamental motivation of De Quincey—and more perceptive—than any previous biographer, fails to be convincing. There is too much left unexplained. What lies beneath the relationship with Elizabeth—beneath the image of death becoming “enthroned within the child, mingled with the prestigia of all life as he knew it”? The essential meaning of De Quincey’s hallucinations, the unity of this life-long catastrophe, is still to be found.

But the analysis of the writings is the most intelligent, the most honest we have yet had. The biographer grasps the underlying as well as the manifest limitations of De Quincey: the insularity of his point of view, the prejudices of his

highly analytic intellect, the absence of standards of value, the remoteness from the life of his day—the remoteness, indeed, from any life.

It is only when he is faced with his final estimate, the necessity for a definitive statement, that Mr. West uneasily takes refuge in apology or eulogy. Realizing the formidable aspect of De Quincey at his worst, the biographer does not wish to realize the emaciated mien—beneath the rotundity of phrase—of De Quincey at his best. For no matter how much we are caught by the splendor or brilliance of a De Quincey passage, it is a broken splendor, the brilliance of a tour de force, and it is only a passage. Dreaming to be philosopher, economist, theorist, historian, De Quincey is tragically narrowed down—a “master of impassioned prose,” a painter of fantasias, a creator of striking imagery, a famous (but dubious) “self-confessor,” an unusually imaginative critic (but too often of minutiae). One suspects that for all his talents De Quincey was almost as thwarted in his writing as in his living; that just as De Quincey’s spirit, passing its days in a “deep syncope and suspension of earthly passion,” walked dreamlike along the fringe of life, so De Quincey’s tortured, stricken genius must be assigned to the fringes of literature.

MAXWELL GEISMAR

More Journalists Speak the Truth

I FOUND NO PEACE. THE JOURNAL OF A FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT. By Webb Miller. Simon and Schuster. \$3.

AND FEAR CAME. By John T. Whitaker. The Macmillan Company. \$2.50.

OF BOOKS by journalists no end. And why not? Certainly no men lead more interesting and few more useful lives—when they take their work seriously and remember that it is “affected by a public interest.” Here, following hard upon the reminiscences of Walter Duranty and Negley Farson, come these autobiographies by Webb Miller, of the United Press, and John T. Whitaker, of the New York *Herald Tribune*.

These are the books of two utterly disillusioned men. They have been behind the scenes, at times even part of the works. They have traveled widely, have watched each perhaps a half-dozen wars and seen men shot, stabbed, hung, and guillotined, and have spent days and weeks and months in attendance upon the leaders of various countries and the proceedings of the League of Nations. All this has left them almost completely hopeless. The hypocrisy and utter selfishness of the leaders of the democratic nations still surviving have made them think better of dictators—not because they wished to, but because other leaders are so incompetent and almost as dishonest. Having all but sacrificed their lives in Ethiopia, both have come back revolted by the degradation of the natives and thinking that their lot cannot be worse under Mussolini. Certainly the countries of some of his present critics have been just as cynical, just as thieving, and just as bloody-handed at other times in other backward regions. Mr. Whitaker cannot forget that the British Draft Disarmament Convention, dictated by “the pacifist-democrat” Ramsay MacDonald, proposed to prohibit bombardment from the air “except against native populations.”

Mr. Whitaker thinks that Webb Miller is the greatest living reporter, and I am not sure that Mr. Miller would not say the same of his friend. The latter’s volume is a shade the better; although it was pounded out in a brief six weeks of

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by

C. B. S. Evans, M.D., F.A.M.A., Member White House Conference, Committee on Maternal Care, Washington—Introduction by R. W. Holmes, M.D., F.A.C.S., Professor of Obstetrics, Northwestern University Medical School—Prefatory and other notes by Norman Haire, Ch.M., M.B., Specializing Obstetrician, Gynecologist and Sexologist, London, England.

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"rest" between the Ethiopian and Spanish wars, the style is better, and the book is more effective because the author pours out his grief over the state of the world with less restraint. It is notably excellent in its analysis and discussion of the collapse of the League of Nations and gives us the fairest and ablest treatment of Henry L. Stimson's conduct of the State Department in Washington that I have seen. The whole volume is addressed to the Italian boy, Francesco, who drove Mr. Whitaker's car in Ethiopia and could not understand what it was all about. "Tell me, Signor," he would say, "why is there war? The priest says war is bad, but Mussolini says war is good. . . . Why am I in Africa?" To this Mr. Whitaker's final answer is:

You became a Fascist because we Americans did not believe, really, in democracy, and you armed yourself because we believed in disarmament conferences, not disarmament; and you went to war because we believed in peace pacts, not peace. But America is a great country, Francesco. The American business man and his wife have a great tradition of liberty and freedom. . . . But they must begin to think soon whether democracy and peace are worth the price. The longer they think that democracy was bought and paid for in 1776, the sooner we will exchange our hats for gas masks and cut our clothes to the pattern of the militarist. If they become afraid for democracy and peace so that they are willing to pay the price, then you and I can live some day in an organized world community where there is justice for all, and peace, and human dignity.

Webb Miller's book is packed with interest and excitement and illuminating revelations of human folly. It is the odyssey of a farm boy with only country common-school and high-school education. It contains much history—for example, the first full story of the false Armistice Day, contributed by Roy W. Howard. He, incidentally, believes that the man

who rang up the American Embassy over its private wire to the French Foreign Office and said that he was a French official and that the armistice had been signed was "very probably" a German secret agent located in Paris who, knowing the desperate condition of the German army, thought that if a false report of the armistice were put out, there would be such rejoicing among the Allied and American forces that the diplomats would have to go through with it promptly.

One reads these pages of Mr. Miller's adventures and wonders how anyone could survive them without becoming either a physical or a mental wreck. When one reads what he has to say of the utter brutality of human beings in power toward those who have fallen into their hands, one is tempted to ask how civilization has lasted as long as it has. There is nothing worse in the book than his story of how the police, on the order of British officials, beat into a "bloody pulp" the non-resistant Indians at Dharasana in May, 1930.

Mr. Miller, too, sees that what is going on is a desperate struggle between economic government and political government, that human beings are being forced in unexpected directions by the "mysterious economic, financial, and political forces released by machinery and science." He is not certain what these relentless forces will do to us in the period of transition. He hopes that the United States "will make the necessary economic and political readjustments gradually and without conflict, but [is] not convinced that this will happen." My readers must not be frightened away from these extremely valuable, realistic, and truth-telling books. They deserve the widest reading. **OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD**

Shorter Notices

PROPHET OF AMERICA: EMERSON AND THE PROBLEMS OF TODAY. By Newton Dillaway. Little, Brown and Company. \$3.

This popularization of Emerson's "Essays" is praised in a preface by Bliss Perry because it is the work of neither a scholar nor a critic; Mr. Perry's assumption being that Emerson still has something to say to the plain man and that Mr. Dillaway knows what it is. If both of them are right, then Emerson deserves all the charges which his worst enemies bring against him. His optimism is fatuous; his opinions cancel one another in a mist of vaguest meaning; and when he does emerge with something to say it is the sort of thing that has been said better, because still more vulgarly, by the success-writers who are supposed to have learned their lingo from him. It would appear after all that Emerson belongs to the scholar and the critic, for he is still a fine writer and he still has something to say on the rather rare level which he was finding for himself exactly a hundred years ago when he published his first book, "Nature." **MARK VAN DOREN**

SPELL AGAINST TIME. By David Morton. G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$2.

Mr. Morton's recent volume of verse exhibits all the traits of its predecessors—rhythmic facility, mildness of diction, a talent essentially feminine in its concern with minor themes and in its method of dealing with them, and, it must be confessed, a good deal of monotony. The verses abound in pretty fancies happily expressed, some of them manage to capture a mood of gentle wistfulness, and there are occasional effective lines. But nowhere do we come upon an arresting idea or an emotion forceful enough to demand its own language. Despite their preoccupation with pastoral subjects, many of these

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verses have a definitely indoor and literary air, as though the poet, lacking emotional impetus, were compelled to exploit all the artifices of his limited technical equipment.

HELEN NEVILLE

DRAMA

Love—Profane and Profaner

"PRELUDE TO EXILE," the play about Richard Wagner at the Guild Theater, did not receive too warm a reception from the critics of the daily press. I myself happen to have found it pretty continuously interesting, and in one respect at least a good deal more satisfactory than biographical plays usually are. Instead of following the outline of a life and thus allowing the form to degenerate into that of the mere chronicle, William McNally, the author, has chosen one compact episode which not only is manageable in dramatic form but has, as a life story so often hasn't, a unified theme.

What we get is not so much a chapter from the biography of Wagner as a comedy on a theme which he happens to illustrate—namely, the gulf which may lie between the "inspiration" of a great romantic artist and the end product of his imagination. There is not the slightest reason for supposing that there was anything especially remarkable about Wagner's passing infatuation for one Frau Wesendonck, the wife of his benefactor. He got over it quickly enough after it had served to give to his mind the fillip that was necessary if he was to compose a certain work. But who dares to say that the affair was trivial or vulgar if it led to the writing of "Tristan and Isolde," which certainly isn't. Or rather, since Wagner himself was only half-convinced of the importance of Frau Wesendonck, what are we to do about our feeling of indulgent superiority when the passion of the music so completely confounds it. It is easy enough to see through Wagner. We can all do that. But as he himself remarks of his wife in the play, to see through is not the same as to understand. His love for the lady of the moment was not "sincere," but the music his hypocrisy enabled him to compose certainly was.

I must confess that I know nothing of the historical accuracy of the play, but there is a technical reason why a composer is a better subject for such a drama than any other sort of artist—you can exhibit his work. There are few things less convincing on the stage than a novelist rushing off to compose a masterpiece or an artist leaping from the arms of an inspiring model to a waiting easel or canvas. Both scenes have been tried on the stage and screen without ever convincing anyone that the artist was achieving more than a daub or the writer writing anything more important than that well-known call for party solidarity so beloved of the typewriter manufacturers. But music can be demonstrated, and on the Guild stage it is, very effectively indeed. One cannot doubt that Wagner composed "Tristan" because one hears it. Where the Guild production is weak is in the acting and to a lesser extent in the direction. Wilfred Lawson, remarkable actor though he has shown himself on previous occasions, is a bit heavy and a bit obvious as Wagner—almost farcical at times when the impression he should convey is rather one of irony. None of the other performers is obviously miscast, but neither Lucile Watson nor Eva LeGallienne seems to be actually caught up in her part.

There is also one point at which I think the author definitely

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missed an opportunity. Though Cosima von Bülow is on the stage, little is made of her character, and one misses what might have been a very effective irony if the audience had been permitted to see in her what Wagner was at the moment too obtuse to perceive—namely, that she was the most charming as well as the most suitable of the ladies available. But the author has, I think, very neatly and very amusingly stated his main question. How much of a genius really partakes of his genius; how deep does it go, or rather how near to the surface does it come? Your romantic is impressed by everything. Even what appear to be the trivialities, the follies, and the vulgarities of his hero are "different" and sublime. Your comic intelligence, on the other hand, has its doubts. Genius is, half the time, confined to a small corner of the whole man. The rest of him is no better than anybody else. He doesn't even have deeper feelings. He merely knows how to make better use of them.

At Westport, Connecticut, two summers ago, Lawrence Langner presented Ruth Gordon in a production of Wycherley's "The Country Wife." Supported by a different company and in a somewhat different version of the same play, Miss Gordon at last reaches Broadway (Henry Miller's Theater) by way of a previous London engagement, and the first thing to be said is that she is repeating an extraordinary personal triumph. As the country bride, ignorant but far from innocent and eager for the pleasures of the town, she *is* the show. When she is absent from the stage—fortunately not much of the time—the play creaks and wheezes along, partly because it is a good deal of an antique, partly because no other member of the company seems able to achieve more than an acceptable style of playing. But whenever Miss Gordon appears, it leaps into extravagant life; in fact, I can remember few examples of pure bravura in acting which equal her performance. It is a very fat part, of course, but Miss Gordon romps through it with unfailing comic inventiveness. I have heard it objected, or maintained, that she modernizes the part, and it is inevitable that an actress should modernize to some extent any part in a play of another day; but if the objectors mean to suggest that the role was ever intended to be played in a straight or realistic fashion, then they have, I think, a strange idea of what the Restoration stage was like. Personalities were at least as important as they are now; many of the roles were written to show off the personal charms and personal talents of individual actresses; and Miss Gordon plays in the only way that she could play successfully. "The Country Wife" is, of course, the most outspokenly bawdy of all the plays by the major Restoration comic writers and is not for the squeamish. But Miss Gordon makes it an unforgettable delight.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

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RECORDS

THERE are people who can enjoy a set of records without a booklet, and there are others who would find the right kind of booklet a help. By the right kind I mean the one that accompanies Columbia's new set of Bach's Organ Music, as opposed to the general run of rubbish that Victor and Columbia hand out. The set is Columbia's second release in its higher-priced series of re-pressings of foreign subscription recordings (seven records, \$14), and the booklet is a reprint of the original booklet. For this the English company went to someone who was an authority on Bach's organ music and could write well—Harvey Grace; and it is he who describes the relation of Bach to the organ and to the fugue, and then discusses the particular organ fugues that are recorded in this volume. And that is the procedure which should be followed in all instances.

The booklet is only one of the things that give this set unusual importance. The records were made by Albert Schweitzer, whose book on Bach's music is a classic, who took the trouble necessary to discover an organ to play on that had less than most modern electrical organs to do with Radio City Music Hall, and whose playing has as little to do with Stokowski. A recent article in *Today* disclosed the fact that 60 per cent of the enormously increased sales of records are in classical records, and that Bach leads all other composers. This becomes less surprising when one recalls that Bach on records means for the most part Bach-Stokowski. I am aware of the argument that Stokowski's performances of his transcriptions are valuable in introducing Bach to many people who would not otherwise listen to him. My answer is to question whether Bach has really been introduced to these people, and whether they will listen to him—whether many of those who know the Toccata and Fugue in D minor from the recording of Stokowski's sensational performance will now find the work interesting as it is played by Schweitzer.

The recording of the organ is unusually clear, which in itself would make the set noteworthy. Excellent recording is also to be found in Columbia's new set of Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*, in a performance by the *Orchestre Symphonique de Paris* under Selmar Meyrowitz that I find good except in the second movement (six records, \$9). On the other hand, the recording of the performance of Brahms's Trio in C, Opus 87, by Myra Hess, Yelley D'Aranyi, and Gaspar Cassado is so bad that I cannot understand its having been released in England and re-pressed here (four records, \$6). Columbia's set of Verdi's "Falstaff" has not arrived in time for comment.

On a Columbia single (\$1.50) is a superb performance by the London Philharmonic under Beecham, superbly recorded, of Sibelius's *Festivo* (Tempo di Bolero), an early and very enjoyable light piece in which one is astonished to hear, somewhat misplaced, the dramatic explosions of the brass and other stylistic mannerisms of his symphonies. On another single (\$1.50) is exquisite playing by Gieseking of Händel's "Harmonious Blacksmith" and Mozart's Rondo alla Turca. On still another (\$1.50) Georges Thill sings in the French manner—somewhat nasally resonant—arias from Gluck's "Iphigénie en Tauride" and Cherubini's "Les Abencérages." And finally Nathan Milstein plays quite well a little inconsequential Sonata in A by Vivaldi (\$1).

B. H. HAGGIN

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Letters to the Editors

Mary McCarthy and Her Critics

Dear Sirs: Mary McCarthy's article, *Circus Politics in Washington State*, is an example of what to expect from a traveling reporter who stops a few days in one place, sees a handful of people, and then considers herself competent to write a survey of the local situation.

The whole tone of the article was reactionary, playing up details of no significance, with the general effect of belittling the whole progressive movement out here. There was no inkling of the strength of the Washington Commonwealth Federation. You may be interested in knowing that every one of the thirty-six candidates indorsed by the W. C. F. in the primaries who passed was elected in the finals, except one minor judicial candidate, Stanley Atwood in the race for State Superintendent of Public Instruction (an important job) dislodged the Republican incumbent, Noah Showalter, who survived the Democratic landslide of 1932. Also the lieutenant governor, Vic Meyers, four Congressmen, including Warren Magnuson, who replaces Zioncheck, and John Coffee, who replaces Wesley Lloyd in Tacoma, several county commissioners, twenty-seven state representatives, and two senators were all W. C. F. candidates. All progressive initiatives and amendments were defeated, however, including "Production for Use," by a consistent vote comparable in size to that for ex-Governor Hartley, the Republican candidate. Democrats seemed interested chiefly in the candidates.

The article missed the significance of the *Post-Intelligencer* strike, which was a final showdown with Hearst on the question of editorial organization, and which has made history in that the guild published its own daily paper in place of the suspended *P.-I.* This strike united the labor movement, and with it hundreds of sympathetic business and professional groups.

The Washington Industrial Council will be interested to hear that they have raised \$15,000,000 to break strikes; the highest figure quoted hereabouts is one-one-hundredth of that amount.

John C. Stevenson was not abandoned by the W. C. F. just before the primaries; he has not cut himself off from

the W. C. F. because most of the state's progressives, including his followers, are in it; the W. C. F. did not run a third-party ticket.

Dave Beck is a "labor czar" only to the reactionary *Seattle Times* and Miss McCarthy. His teamster delegates comprise at least 20 per cent, not 3 per cent, of the Central Labor Council vote; but these teamsters are becoming more and more militant.

SELDEN C. MENELEE

Seattle, November 7

Dear Sirs: Of many letters received by *The Nation* from readers in the state of Washington, I have chosen Mr. Menefee's as the archetype for a full reply. Mr. Menefee touches on all the important points brought up by his fellow-correspondents.

Taking up Mr. Menefee's list in the order in which he has presented it, I must begin by denying that "the whole tone of the article was reactionary." How Mr. Menefee or anyone else could have actually read the last page of the article and in honesty have drawn that conclusion is to me utterly baffling. I was undoubtedly critical of certain aspects of the progressive movement in Washington, but my criticism was aimed from the left and not from the right. It is my opinion that the progressives and pseudo-progressives of the state are too opportunistic, on the whole too much concerned with office-grabbing and office-holding, and too little concerned with the genuine organizational problems of the labor movement, whose complete confidence they must gain if they are to progress toward a planned society.

As to the Commonwealth Federation, I wonder what Mr. Menefee considers its *real* strength is. Its main objective in the primaries was the nomination of Stevenson, and Stevenson took a licking. To say that it elected thirty-six candidates simply because it indorsed them is like saying that the American Labor Party elected Governor Lehman in New York State. Surely, Mr. Menefee does not believe that Vic Meyers, whom he mentions, owes his reelection as lieutenant governor to the fact that the Commonwealth Federation put its hallmark on him. Mr. Menefee gives the show away when he says, "All progressive initiatives and amendments were de-

feated, however, including 'Production for Use.'" Since Production for Use is the slogan, the *raison d'être*, of the Commonwealth Federation, the defeat would seem to tell something of its strength.

Mr. Menefee's second citation is no rebuttal. If he will turn to the last paragraph of my article, he will find the following sentence, "The *P.-I.* strike has demonstrated to labor its own strength," which, in its context, says all the things that Mr. Menefee has gone to the trouble of saying again. Since the article concerned the election, I could not be more expansive about the strike.

With Mr. Menefee's third point I am in complete agreement. One-one-hundredth of that amount *would* be much more like it, though other correspondents set the figure as high as \$500,000. The \$15,000,000 was a stupid slip which I should have caught in proof and didn't.

In reference to the Commonwealth's sticker ticket, I am told that both the Commonwealth and the Townsendites met in caucus on primary day and nominated new party slates for the general election, the Commonwealth leading off with Howard Costigan, and the Townsendites with W. B. Pemberton. Since this meeting must have been to some extent premeditated, it seems to me to constitute an acknowledgment of Stevenson's forthcoming defeat, and therefore, ethically considered, an abandonment of him. I understand that some time after I wrote the article the Commonwealth people decided to conform, and gave up the notion of a sticker ticket for the sake of party solidarity. If Mr. Menefee will read the article more carefully, he will discover that I did not say that Stevenson *had* abandoned the Commonwealth Federation, but that it was thought that he *would* do so. With the next major elections two years off, he still has time.

Dave Beck, as vice-president of the Teamsters' International, and president of the Teamsters' affiliates, *should* control at least 20 per cent of the Central Labor Council vote. (Another correspondent calls it 33 per cent.) However, as Mr. Menefee says, the teamsters and their affiliates are becoming more and more militant; Dave Beck, increasingly conservative, could not now in a crisis count on more than 3 per cent of the vote.

Finally, I must tell Mr. Menefee that it is "grossly inaccurate" to describe me

as a "traveling reporter." I am no mere tourist in the state of Washington. It is my own, my native land.

MARY MCCARTHY

New York, November 25

Against a Labor Party

Dear Sirs: With the extraordinary lift *The Nation* has taken in the last few months—format, style, editorial direction, content—which has brought liberal journalism in America to a new peak, it is a pity that at one crucial point you should be so unrealistic. I refer to your uncritical advocacy of a labor party as the sound political course for progressives.

In your last issue the first editorial paragraph speaks of the folly of liberals in hoping that Mr. Roosevelt will some day lead a labor party—as though that were the criterion of statesmanship today. In the preceding issue, the Task for Progressives is outlined by Max Lerner as the achievement of unity—in what?—in a labor party, of course.

This is a strange and inconsistent reversal of the position only recently taken by at least the Marxist wing of the liberals, and still taken in the discussion of European prototypes of an American Labor Party. In your own columns, less than a month ago, appeared a scathing and brilliant analysis of the British Labor Party by Harold Laski. Words are seldom wasted any more trying to defend the German Social Democratic Party's role in permitting Hitler to come to power; that party of course was a "labor party," resting solidly on organized labor, and led, like the British Labor Party, by the leaders of organized labor. But in swinging away from the grandiose "infantile leftism" that considered the coming American revolution to be only just around the corner, the intellectual left is falling back into even older mistakes.

Let me put down a few relevant facts challenging your present position:

1. The German Social-Democratic

Party (a "labor party") failed to achieve socialism or prevent fascism.

2. The British Labor Party's outstanding contribution was Ramsay MacDonald.

3. The best that other Continental labor parties have been able to produce are the people's fronts. If Spain wins, it will be a special case, similar to Russia. France is on a desperate defensive with no hope of moving on to socialism, unless, likewise, by a bloody revolution à la Russe.

4. In America labor has been as militant as it ever was in Europe, but even less radical. Witness the Knights of Labor, Gompers, Green, etc. Lewis and the C. I. O. are also to the right, even of Ramsay MacDonald.

5. American labor's outstanding contribution to independent political action up till now has been the American Labor Party of New York—better than supporting Tammany or the Republicans to be sure, but a poor imitation of insurgency.

6. Where there were radical candidates or measures on the ballot, labor's support was even more uncertain than that of middle-class groups.

But can we not learn the lesson of the mass movements of discontent that the depression has brought out in this country, both as to potentialities and dangers? The Wisconsin Progressives, the Minnesota Farmer-Laborites, the California Epics, the Washington Commonwealth Federation—yes, even the deluded following of Dr. Townsend, Huey Long, Father Coughlin, and their ilk—show that radicalism is not confined to the working class in this country. Often quite the reverse. Radical leadership will come from middle-class elements fully as much as from labor during the coming years. Whether those elements take us into fascism or into an economy of abundance through the introduction of production for use will depend to no small extent on our present intellectual leadership.

ALFRED M. BINGHAM

New York, November 23

CONTRIBUTORS

STEPHEN NAFT is a journalist who has lived and worked and traveled for many years in Latin America. At one time he acted as the editor of a South American news agency.

ROBERT DELL is the Manchester *Guardian's* correspondent in Geneva. A long career as a journalist in Europe has given him an understanding of events on the Continent equaled by few foreign correspondents writing today.

LOUIS F. GITTLER, after a year in Berlin studying propaganda methods, is now a roving reporter on the Continent.

LOUIS ADAMIC, one of the country's outstanding free-lance labor reporters, has just returned from Akron, where the technique of the sit-down strike originated, and from other mass-production centers.

IRWIN EDMAN is associate professor of philosophy at Columbia University. More relevant to Mr. Edman's contribution to this issue is the fact that he will review Dorothy Parker's poems in next week's *Nation*.

DOROTHY BREWSTER teaches English in Columbia University's extension courses and is coauthor with Angus Burrell of two critical works, "Dead Reckonings in Fiction" and "Modern Fiction." "A Book of Contemporary Short Stories," of which she is editor, will be published this month.

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